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M.A. THESIS ABSTRACT

**The Military and the Media: Historical Perspective  
and Prospective Study of the Relationship**

by Capt. Dwight C. Daniels

This 310-page study includes an historical overview of the U.S. military-media relationship and a prospective study of what the future holds.

The relationship is reviewed from its colonial roots to the controversy over Grenada. Accounts of the Civil War, War of 1812, Mexican War, Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, Korean War, and Vietnam War are given, describing the changing nature of warfare, the growth of propaganda, the role of censorship, and the development of media through technological change.

Emphasis is given to Vietnam and Grenada. Reports of both the government-appointed Sidle Commission and the privately-funded Twentieth Century Task Force are analyzed. Maj. Gen. Sidle gives his views on progress in reaction to his panel's findings, while a Pentagon spokesman discusses the military's efforts from his perspective.

The prospective study is based upon a questionnaire. Respondents were military cadets from the University of

Missouri-Columbia's Army, Navy and Air Force Reserve Officer Training programs and students in the University School of Journalism. The students, all seniors, were questioned on their attitudes toward the military-media relationship, censorship, national institutions, national problems, and their trust in one another, among other topics.

Journalism and military students appear to be culturally divided on many issues. Military students, for instance, support withholding media from an "invasion taking place" -- a Grenada-like scenario. A majority said they would bar the press, for national security reasons, from accompanying troops. Journalism students disagreed. When asked to indicate how much trust they hold for various national institutions, the cadets rated the media near the bottom of their "credibility" list. Similarly, journalism students ranked the military near the bottom of their scale.

The thesis points to a need for change in journalism and military educational programs for greater mutual understanding.

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THE MILITARY AND THE MEDIA:  
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPECTIVE STUDY  
OF THE RELATIONSHIP

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School  
University of Missouri-Columbia

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

---

by  
Dwight Cody Daniels  
December 1985

Dr. Donald J. Brenner

Thesis Supervisor

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The author also thanks Professor Karen List for graciously permitting the questionnaire to be administered to her students. Instructors in the University's Air Force, Navy, and Army Reserve Officer Training Corps programs were also helpful in granting permission for the questionnaire to be conducted in their classes.

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## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION

Knowledge will forever govern ignorance. And a people who mean to be their own governors, must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives. A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both. -- James Madison<sup>1</sup>

James Madison's words in 1822 concerning knowledge and the people's access to it being the critical link to a democratic form of government are as pertinent today as they were then. Indeed, those precepts are the very foundation of the right the United States' press has enjoyed to freely report on government and its activities. Those rights are also precisely the reason that no other media-military controversy in recent times has received as much attention as the U.S. government decision to bar reporters -- at least initially -- from accompanying American troops on their October 1983 invasion of Grenada. The resulting furor spurred heated editorials in The New York Times and The Washington Post and just about every other newspaper in the

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<sup>1</sup>Letter to W.T. Barry, 4 August 1822, The Complete Madison, Saul Padover (ed.), Harper and Brothers, New York, 1953, p.337.

nation. The tons of newsprint, the bold headlines and the indignation of the networks' news commentators, underscored the almost universal anger the press felt at being left behind. The Reagan Administration's actions were devious, journalists argued. In columns and broadcasts they told their readers and viewers that the First Amendment had been violated.

Bill Wheatly, a producer at NBC Nightly News said:

Better to provoke some politely critical editorials that relatively few people would read (and the administration could ignore) than to revive the ghosts of Vietnam by allowing the networks to beam into millions of living rooms across the country graphic footage of American soldiers killing and being killed.<sup>2</sup>

Not only the news media protested -- even White House assistant press secretary Les Janka resigned in disgust. Janka told an interviewer:

'Yes,' the White House said, 'We're going to keep the press out of there . . . .' But look what they did do. They did have a presidential speech ready, they did have Mrs. Charles (Prime Minister of Dominica) up here ready to talk to the media right away, they had George Shultz ready to go on the media shows. They were ready to communicate. There was no lack of communication; it was just one-sided communication.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Mark Hertsgaard, "How Reagan Seduced Us: Inside the President's Propaganda Factory," Village Voice, 18 September 1984, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

With the passage of time, the controversy over the entire affair seems to have calmed to some extent, but it is by no means resolved. Although the recommendations of the Defense Department's Sidle Commission have apparently received the endorsement of the Pentagon, many observers of the military-media relationship now wonder what will actually happen with future military undertakings. Do contingency plans include taking the press along on future battles?

Furthermore, if the plans do provide for a press contingent, has there been adequate thought given to meeting the needs of an increasingly technologically advanced media? From recent Pentagon tests of a media pooling system (a Sidle Panel recommendation) serve as an indicator, the verdict is still in question. The first test, which involved reporting pools being transported to a U.S. military exercise in Honduras, was denounced as a failure in almost every respect by both the Pentagon and the media. The military claimed the media "leaked" details of the pool, thereby compromising security. The media said that government planning was nonexistent. The second test, conducted in the states, went more smoothly.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Media Should be Insured Access to Military Actions, Broadcasting, (3 June 1985): 105.

Nevertheless, in coming to grips with the division between the media and military, there has been progress in the aftermath of the Grenada invasion. Whether or not the invasion served its stated purpose in halting the spread of communism, it has clearly had another impact. It has shown that, ten years after the U.S. defeat in Vietnam, there has been no reconciliation to the bitter war fought not in the swampy fields of IndoChina, but to the battle fought for the hearts and minds of the American public -- between media and military.

Importantly, too, the reaction of the American people to the Grenada affair has left many in the news media wondering why their credibility with the public is so low. Initial polls showed the public reaction to the press being left behind was certainly not what journalists would have preferred; there was strong public support for the administration decision. "The evidence abounds, Grenada being only the latest example, that the press is, for the moment, losing its special position with the public," wrote Richard M. Clurman, chairman of Media and Society Seminars at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Richard M. Clurman, "Who Cared that the Press Was Kept Out of Grenada," American Society of Newspaper Editors Bulletin, December 1983): 18.

This state of affairs leaves many worried. And their concern raises questions on the future of "war reporting" that require discussion and thought. The question arises: do Americans want a return to the situation as it stood before Vietnam and Korea -- with World War II-style reporting that America's boys did nothing wrong, and everything right -- with military censors in the field to ensure just that? In this more enlightened age, one would think not. However, the words of Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes ring true: "When a nation is at war, many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be tolerated so long as men fight." Whether one agrees completely with Holmes' thinking, nearly all would agree that the national interest would best be served by media and military alike if ground rules were established on how each would perform its respective role before any future military conflict occurs.<sup>6</sup>

After Watergate and Vietnam, it has become clear that the American people now demand the truth, not a governmental adulteration of it. Journalist Carl Sessions Stepp wrote:

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<sup>6</sup>Elmer Davis and Byron Price, War Information and Censorship, (Washington D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, undated), pp. 56-57.

Never again will the press, public and government march in a locked-arm partnership lubricated by mutual trust and good motives all around. . . . the escalating complexities. . . have scattered skepticism and adversarial attitudes throughout our culture.<sup>7</sup>

Though commentators disagree on just how much influence news coverage of Vietnam had in this respect, an outgrowth from it and other events is that once friendly adversaries -- reporters who report on government (and the military) and the government they cover -- are not that friendly anymore. People in the media generally think the government is hiding something no matter what the situation, and most military officers seem to believe reporters will tilt their reporting against the military no matter what the story.<sup>8</sup>

Wherever one takes a stand concerning proper media and military relations, a principle recommendation of the commission headed by retired Maj. Gen. Winant P. Sidle, former Pentagon chief spokesman in Vietnam, makes a great deal of sense. That recommendation (among the others that

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<sup>7</sup>Carl Sessions Stepp, "In Wake of Grenada," The Quill, (March 1984): 13.

<sup>8</sup>If six years of serving under military commanders as a public affairs officer and military spokesman have taught the author anything, it is that mistrust stemming from Vietnam is present much of the time, even if only as a subtle reminder.

will be described in detail later in this thesis) calls for efforts in educating both media and military about the roles of the other. It proposes that with a greater understanding on each side, future cooperation between the two may be more of a possibility. For those already in professional roles, unfortunately, the seeds of skepticism may have been nurtured too long for changing attitudes. But what of the future, where educational efforts might serve a vital need?

With that question in mind, what follows is a concise analysis of the historical U.S. military-media relationship. It is offered as perspective for the present situation with particular attention given to the Vietnam era where the seed of the current conflict between press and military may have taken root. An examination of historical texts and a survey of current literature form the basis for this analysis. A report of the Grenada episode is offered through a review of contemporary journals and the reports of the two task forces which have studied the controversy. Particular emphasis is given on what has happened in the aftermath of the invasion and what is likely to occur in the future.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>The Twentieth Century Task Force's findings, along with the Sidle panel's, are reviewed in Chapter Five.



Finally, as a result of the panel recommendations on improving educational efforts in media and military circles, it was felt that it would be helpful to determine what attitudes related to military-media relations are prevalent among future journalists and military officers. Data from a questionnaire administered to the two groups forms the basis for a chapter that details what the two think about one another. The findings are intended as a basis for recommending what needs to be done in terms of education to promote greater understanding, a topic covered in the concluding chapter. By no means are the data from the questionnaire altogether conclusive since the findings could change rapidly with future events such as the outbreak of war. But it is also hoped that the recommendations made herein will foster greater cooperation and understanding by the news media and the military in their respective roles in American life so that the nation will be better served the next time their relationship is thrust into the national limelight.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>It is also hoped that the study will personally aid the author in his role as a military public affairs officer by enhancing his understanding of the military-media relationship, which will serve to benefit his day-to-day professional life.

## Chapter Two

### From the Colonial Period to the Spanish-American War

Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press and that cannot be limited without being lost. When the press is free, and every man able to read, all is safe. -- Thomas Jefferson, 1787.

Nothing can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper. . . . I will add that the man who never looks into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them; inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer to the truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods. -- Thomas Jefferson, 1807.<sup>1</sup>

In beginning an historical overview of the military-media relationship, one must quickly confess that there is no agreed upon "first" historical relationship to cite. Many historical texts, however, do credit Napoleon Bonaparte with beginning the era of wartime propaganda. His efforts were made possible, one might conclude, by very one-sided military-media relations in which he controlled the news through issuing military bulletins about his various

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<sup>1</sup>Letters to Carrington, 1787; and J. Norvell, 1807. Quoted by George Seldes, The Facts Are...A Guide to Falsehood and Propaganda in the Press and Radio (In Fact, Inc., New York, 1942), p. 6.

conquests. While his immense ego was perhaps the greatest causal factor for the development of his much-publicized battles, he also clearly recognized the value of "turning battle dispatches into propagandistic bulletins aimed at firing up troops in the field, (toward) shoring up support on the home front, and demoralizing the enemy." He masterfully manipulated the media of his time, with the result that he is remembered and acclaimed not only a military genius, but as a propagandist supreme.<sup>2</sup>

But crediting Napoleon for being first in the propaganda field is not possible without some dispute, because others before him, including Frederick the Great, also spent hours and hours "polishing and revising the narratives of their military campaigns," wrote Joseph J. Mathews. Frederick, however, fancied himself more as an historian. What Napoleon did was to refine the art of propaganda, applying its principles with "unparalleled intuitive understanding" not for the historical record, but in shaping events as they occurred, Mathews wrote.<sup>3</sup>

Others argue that "war reporting" or "war correspondence" is as old as war itself. An anonymous Greek messenger

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<sup>2</sup>Joseph J. Mathews, Reporting the Wars, (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1957), p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

ran the 26 miles from ancient Marathon to Athens with the news of victory against Persian invaders -- and dropped dead from exhaustion.<sup>4</sup> Some view Xenophon's written descriptions of wars fought 400 years before Christ as the beginning of such efforts. Others note that Julius Caesar also provided written accounts of various battles.<sup>5</sup> So, there remains no precise answer as to when the military-media relationship began and no perfect description of what a war reporter or correspondent is. For the purposes of this work, the military-media relationship will be examined specifically in the framework of United States history, although even here it is hard to summarize precisely, because controls on information have varied greatly depending upon conditions. This study will also concentrate on major wartime periods, because that is when the relationship between press and military has been tested most.

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<sup>4</sup>The anonymous runner is often confused with the Greek courier Pheidippides who once ran 150 miles in 48 hours to deliver a wartime message [Encyclopedia Americana, (Danbury, Conn.: Grolier Inc., 1985), Vol. 21, p. 847].

<sup>5</sup>Mathews, Reporting, p. 31.

### **The Colonial Period and the Revolutionary War**

In the Colonial government press, licensing was used as an effective method of suppression and control, because government viewed the presses as a danger to order and the status quo. Laws and military dictum, too, were effective in controlling information deemed unpopular by the government, and to stifle dissent. Controls also were set to "maintain pure religious doctrine and worship, to guard public morality, to preserve a wholesome respect for authority of magistrates and elders, and to give security against injury from dissemination of unorthodox ideas."<sup>6</sup> Typical of the times was a May 13, 1725, Massachusetts Order-in-Council, which warned Boston's printers "upon their peril not to insert in their prints anything of the public affairs. . . related to the war without the order of the government."<sup>7</sup>

The public, itself, was also an effective censor. Violent mob actions destroyed some newspaper offices and threats repressed even more. By the late 1760s, Colonial editors had firmly taken sides in the coming rebellion,

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<sup>6</sup>Frederick S. Siebert, The Rights and Privileges of the Press (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1934), p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>James Russell Wiggins, Freedom or Secrecy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 94. Quoting from Freedom of the Press in Massachusetts.

investing their efforts wholeheartedly in support of their slice of the political spectrum. Indeed, the patriot editors would have found it impossible to continue under the British occupation because revolution was imminent. Both the Boston Gazette and Massachusetts Spy newspapers, among others, had to be produced secretly outside Boston. Editor Isaiah Thomas's Spy press was smuggled out on the eve of the battle of Lexington, which he witnessed first-hand. "His report of the encounter remains today as the most notable war reporting of that conflict," wrote historians Edwin and Michael Emery.<sup>8</sup> But by no means was Thomas's reporting objective -- it was "highly colored with propaganda" just as all news accounts in the partisan press period were. An example:

One of the expresses immediately fled, and was pursued two miles by an officer, who, when he had got up with him presented a pistol, and told him he was a dead man if he did not stop, but he rode on till he came up to a house, when stopping of a sudden his horse threw him off, having the presence of mind to halloo (the rider, of course, not the horse) to the people in the house, 'Turn out. Turn out. I have got one of them.'<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Edwin and Michael Emery, The Press and America: An Interpretative History of the Mass Media, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978), pp. 66-67. Until the war began, Thomas' Spy motto was: "A Weekly Political and Commercial Paper -- Open to All Parties, but Influenced by None."

<sup>9</sup>Ibid. Quoting the Massachusetts Spy, 3 May 1775, p. 3.

Another patriot journalist's efforts were based on actual participation with troops in the field. Thomas Paine's The American Crisis series was inspired by his first-hand experience in marching with General George Washington's tattered troops at a time when "many of the soldiers had only a hazy notion of what the shooting was all about." Paine's words were simple and readily understood by the foot soldiers who knew by their tone and dignity "that one of their own was speaking." Paine wrote:

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict the more glorious the triumph.<sup>10</sup>

Paine's words, born from seeing life firsthand among weary soldiers, served as an inspiration to the troops of General Washington when they were ordered read.

In general during the revolution, the American side was opposed to secrecy. With some three dozen newspapers actively operating, however, there were still no truly organized means of covering the war. Although they served to

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid, p. 69. Quoting Paine's American Crisis series.

keep leaders in touch with one another, which contributed to a commonality of attitudes and the actions they decided upon, their coverage was largely limited to private letters that arrived and to official and semi-official messages. They also borrowed heavily from other newspapers -- foreign and Colonial. The conditions of war caused difficulty, too, in getting news on time. When riders approached disputed territories, they often had to detour, which caused considerable delays in information reaching the newspapers.<sup>11</sup>

Haphazard coverage and delays notwithstanding, the papers did serve to unify public sentiment for the war. When press control was implemented, tactics included giving false information to minimize public perception of defeats, continually rejecting peace as an option, and the sacrifice of the truth when it could possibly harm the war effort.

When it came to the media-military relationship, General Washington not only saw the importance of the

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<sup>11</sup>Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism, 93d ed.; (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962), p. 99. Mott notes an exception to the hapazard coverage. The first-ever syndicated column in American journalism was edited by Boston patriots and known as the "Journal of Occurences." It was distributed throughout the colonies and was propagandistic in nature. It included day-to-day events in Boston, highlighting the town's "sufferings under the rule of the British military. . ." and lasted just 10 months.



inspirational words of Paine, he viewed the press as critical to the morale of the entire populace. Because the printers received most of their ink, type and paper from Europe, a logistical crisis developed when American mills could not meet the wartime demand for paper stock. General Washington "issue(d) a plea asking Patriot women to save all available material that might be converted into printing paper" so the newspapers could continue being published.<sup>12</sup>

#### **The War of 1812**

There was no real attempt by newspapers to organize their coverage in the War of 1812 either, and as a result, reporting was not much improved over what had been the case in the Revolutionary period. News was primarily centered upon official information disseminated from Washington, although some editors did organize pony express riders to get information in a more timely manner than before. Because most information was from official sources and appeared

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<sup>12</sup>Emery, The Press, p. 70.

weeks after the actual events took place, censorship generally proved unnecessary.<sup>13</sup> One exception was the attempt to silence a paper in Baltimore. The editors of the Federal Republican, known for publishing vehement attacks against the administration's war policy, had editors who were charged with treason. Two War of Independence heroes, Generals James Lingan and "Light Horse Harry" Lee, took it upon themselves to protect the paper against mob action, but were unsuccessful.<sup>14</sup>

The defenders held out until the irate citizens set up a cannon to blow the (newspaper) building down. At this point cooler heads negotiated a truce, including safe conduct of the besieged to the jail for protection. After the mob destroyed the press and building, its leaders ordered an assault on the jail. Some of the prisoners escaped, but nine were beaten and thrown to the mob. General Lingan was killed. . . . Lee was maimed for life.<sup>15</sup>

The War of 1812 had the first true American war correspondent, according to historian Frank Luther Mott. He credits newspaper owner James M. Bradford, who had enlisted with General Andrew Jackson's army, as the first. Bradford's

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<sup>13</sup>Peter M. Sandman, David M. Rubin, David B. Sachsman. Media: An Introductory Analysis of American Mass Communications, (3d Ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982) p. 459.

<sup>14</sup>Emery, The Press, p. 101.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

series of letters that described the war were published by his paper, the St. Francisville Times Piece of Louisiana.<sup>16</sup>

### **The Mexican War**

In the Mexican War of 1846-1847, American war correspondence began to develop a flavor of its own in transition from its roots in the tradition of English war correspondence. Wrote historian Mathews: "From the beginning the war correspondent was in large measure an Anglo-American institution; elsewhere, the evolution of war news usually progressed through different instruments." He credits the strength of the press and the tremendous interest in the conflicts being waged as essential requirements for the initial development of the modern profession when the Mexican War raged. He quotes historian F. Lauriston Bullard as describing that period of conflict as perhaps "the first war to be adequately and comprehensively reported in the daily press."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Mott, American Journalism, p. 196.

<sup>17</sup>Mathews, Reporting, pp. 52-53. Citing Famous War Correspondents.

Mathews wrote that the U.S. press did not have as long a tradition of dependency upon official sources for war news as did the British.

In sharp contrast to the dignified professionalism of the Europeans, the Americans reported wars as they fought them: they ignored rules and precedents, introduced a spirit of competition unknown to the European press, and welcomed rough writers as enthusiastically as rough riders. There were no legal restrictions on reporting in the Mexican War. More than that, there was very little to distinguish a reporter from an (sic) ordinary soldier. Writing men fought and a number of fighting men wrote.<sup>18</sup>

Intense competition in the Mexican War for priority in news transmission distinguished it from earlier conflicts. Although the telegraph was by then a reality, it did not carry more than a few brief items of importance. Instead, "express" organizations using horses and riders filled the need. For example, the Baltimore Sun and Philadelphia Ledger kept 60 horses for rushing information to newspapers as quickly as it arrived in New Orleans from Mexico. Another innovative technique to speed the publishing of news from the war was instituted by the New Orleans Picayune. That newspaper actually sent boats equipped with composing

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<sup>18</sup>Mathews, Reporting, p. 54.

rooms out to sea to meet slower steamers coming from Mexico. By the time they docked back at the port, the composers had already set the type for the latest stories so that they could be rushed to the Picayune presses. But the quicker transmission of information did not necessarily reflect a greater quality of news since there were many "writersoldiers. . . who could not distinguish a skirmish from a battle, and some of the energy devoted to speeding information to the press was misspent on valueless wordage."<sup>19</sup>

Still, the quantity and variety of the information that came out of the conflict -- including interpretive features on the economics and politics of it all -- left its mark on the reporting of the period.

### **The Civil War**

In the Civil War, controls on information varied greatly, although suppression of newspapers through direct governmental orders and limitations imposed on mailing privileges were the primary means used. But such severity

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid, pp. 55-57. And, Mott, American Journalism, p. 249.

alternated with lax security under which journalists knew many of the most important governmental secrets. The new speed with which reporters could get information back to their papers made censorship more of an issue, but an initial attempt at imposing it failed. It began as a cooperative effort between government and correspondents, but lasted only three months before it proved to be an unacceptable situation because of numerous disputes over the system's fairness and integrity. After a more formal agreement was reached, the climate was generally one in which sensitive information was held, copy was approved in advance, and only recognized reporters were allowed to act as correspondents. The agreement was made easier by a move of censorship responsibility from the State Department to the War Department, where Secretary Edwin Stanton clarified policies and reassured reporters that any deletions made were to be limited to military matters. Reporters were much more comfortable with the firmer policy.<sup>20</sup>

A case testing the new rules occurred when outraged General William Sherman found out that reporter Thomas Knox of the New York Herald had clearly violated the established

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<sup>20</sup>Stephen Sears, "The First News Blackout, American Heritage vol. 36, June-July 1985, p. 27.

policy. Sherman had Knox arrested and held as a spy.

(Sherman) had no intention of shooting the man, as he had every right to do, but he was convinced that this was a good test case. In the end, (Lincoln) intervened, Knox got out of his predicament, and Sherman got what he wanted -- the understanding that all correspondents must be accredited, or recognized, journalists and that they must be acceptable to commanders in the field.<sup>21</sup>

A group of newspapers known as the "Copperhead" press caused grave concern to northern leaders. The newspapers' editors savagely attacked President Abraham Lincoln's policy on slavery and the war (thus, the deadly snake label). The attacks went on month after month, although angry citizens often mobbed the papers' offices and the government occasionally intervened. General Ambrose E. Burnside, commander of the Department of Ohio, took matters into his own hands when he arrested, tried and sentenced to prison Dayton Empire owner Clement L. Vallandigham for his anti-war publishing. Lincoln, however, intervened and reduced Vallandigham's sentence to banishment beyond Confederate lines.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Emery, The Press, pp. 168-169.

<sup>22</sup>Harold L. Nelson and Dwight L. Teeter Jr. Law of Mass Communication -- Freedom and Control of Print and Broadcast Media, (Mineola, N.Y.: The Foundation Press, Inc., 1969) p. 29.

On the front itself, an estimated 150 "special" correspondents served northern newspapers and magazines during the war, while the South had about 100. All in all, the war was thoroughly covered with generally uncensored and on-scene reporting prevalent throughout. Newspapers often devoted a third of their 48 columns to war coverage from the various fronts.<sup>23</sup>

The problems in covering the war were many, however. If a reporter (or his reporting) became unpopular with the troops, he could face difficulties primarily through non-cooperation within the military. Many generals were declared by reporters to be impossible to work with, and likewise, many generals held reporters in the utmost contempt. A prime example was General Sherman, who wrote his brother, Senator John Sherman, to complain about the "infinite harm" members of the press were doing to his campaigns. "The only two really successful strokes out here," he wrote, "have succeeded because of the absence of the newspapers, or by throwing them off the trail."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Mott, Reporting, p. 329.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid, p. 336. Sherman, when told that three newspaper correspondents had been killed by an exploding shell, reportedly told a subordinate: "Good! Now we shall have news from hell before breakfast!"



Sherman's concern that leaked information could harm his campaigns was not without foundation. Confederate General Robert E. Lee was studious in reviewing northern papers for intelligence value. Lee placed particular importance on reports by a correspondent from the Philadelphia Inquirer who, Lee said, "knew what he reported and reported what he knew."<sup>25</sup>

Providing coverage of the war had a large economic impact on the newspapers of the period. The New York Herald, for instance, had as many as 40 writers in the field at one time and reportedly spent as much as a half-million dollars on coverage of the war -- a huge monetary outlay for the time. But whether the Herald or other papers got good returns on their investments is debatable. Although reporters were allowed to report from the front for the first time, the quality of their writing was often low. Too many routinely and haphazardly changed dates and names or jumbled them to suit the story or their flair for drama.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Mathews, Reporting, p. 86. Citing Douglas S. Freeman, Robert E. Lee, A Biography, 4 vols. (New York, 1934-35) IV. Lee's studious nature also aided in making his official dispatches possibly the best of the war. "He preferred where possible to form a continuous narrative and refused to dramatize the story," a rarity among Civil War dispatches.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid, p. 332.

That ineptitude may have been part of the reason military officials wanted to fix responsibility for the news being printed at home. Their request for newspapers to use by-lines on their published war stories were met, but did not aid accountability much because most reporters used pseudonyms. Ironically, the pen names became famous and were often used in an almost promotional fashion to accompany the stories. The by-lines of today owe their existence as a journalistic institution to this period.<sup>27</sup>

The impact of new technology, including the telegraph and the cable, affected the war's coverage, too, although the wires were often refused to reporters at the whim of the government. The lines were not yet a network, either, and the transmissions made over them were often controlled or even sabotaged. But their use spawned new reporting techniques that have also carried over to this day, i.e., the use of the summary lead and the inverted-pyramid style of writing. Because reporters feared that their dispatches might not make it back in their entirety, they put the most important details first, and added color and other details later. Editors on the other end set the initial bulletins

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid, p. 338.

into headline type immediately, while waiting for the rest of the information to come across the wire.<sup>28</sup>

Throughout the war the southern press provided the better coverage, although its newspapers had fewer correspondents. While the South's reporters experienced hardships similar to those experienced by their northern counterparts, the press cooperative known as the Press Association of the Confederacy provided the closest thing to objective reporting that occurred in the war. Part of the reason was the association's director, J. S. Thrasher. He signed contracts with telegraph agencies and lobbied successfully for less restrictive postal rules, which provided the association with some stability. Thrasher's insistence on disseminating only "accurate reports for the good of the public, consistent with military security," also impressed Southern generals. It helped gain their confidence and increased the likelihood that reports from the field would find their way back unmolested. Thrasher also slashed opinion and commentary from his correspondents' reports and guarded against printing rumor, a revolutionary idea considering the

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<sup>28</sup>Emery, The Press, p. 177. And, Sandman, Rubin, Sachsman, Media, p. 47. Another effect of the war was the doubling of the size of the press corps in Washington which established it as the national news center it remains today.

generally biased writing of the period.<sup>29</sup>

But the South's papers were faced with dwindling paper supplies, because only about 5 percent of American paper mills were located there, and the mills could not adequately supply printers. The newspapers also suffered from a labor shortage because most editors were called to the battle fronts. Invading Union armies literally put many publishers on the move. Memphis Appeal editor Colonel Benjamin Franklin Dill barely escaped on a railroad flatcar when Memphis was invaded. He moved his press to nearby Hernando but did not stop there for long. Invading troops forced successive moves to the towns of Vicksburg, Grenada, Jackson, Meridian, Atlanta, and Montgomery, among others. In despair, Dill took off for the last time when he loaded his "proof-press on a mule's back, put some type in his saddlebags, and took to the mountains." When bluecoats finally caught up with him near Columbus, Georgia, Dill's newspaper had been affectionately nicknamed quite appropriately, the "Moving Appeal."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid, p. 174. Citing "The Confederate Press Association: A Pioneer News Agency," in Journalism Quarterly.

<sup>30</sup>Mott, American Journalism, pp. 363-364.

### **The Spanish-American War**

The Spanish-American War occurred as American journalism shifted away from political parties. That gave the government in power fewer reasons to restrain freedom of publication. War correspondents often as not remained as much combatants as the soldiers doing the fighting. Leniency in terms of information control was still extraordinary. Mott wrote: "The newspapers freely printed reports of the movements of the navy and army. . . and rumors of (all) American plans as they could gather." Historian Phillip Knightley wrote that it was an ideal campaign from the viewpoint of the 500 reporters who covered it. "The Associated Press chartered a flotilla of boats, which, throughout the naval engagement, cruised at will through the battle lines, ignoring fire from both sides and scurrying back and forth to the nearest cable station."<sup>31</sup>

The current of sensationalism spawned by the "yellow" journalism of the period did much to foster the conflict, if not cause it. Leading the yellow press was flamboyant publisher William Randolph Hearst of the New York Journal,

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<sup>31</sup>Mott, American Journalism, p. 56. And, Phillip Knightley, The First Casualty (New York and London: Harcourt Brace Janovich, 1975), p. 56. Some sources say as few as 200 reporters were there, but most accounts note a total of 500.

who spent some \$500,000 on the conflict and, at its height, put out as many as 40 daily extras. His paper was in a fierce circulation battle with Joseph Pulitzer's New York Journal. Without that circulation war, there may well have been no war with Spain at all, some historians have written. The jingoistic propaganda of both papers, and the others in the yellow press, may have altered public opinion to the point that it forced an unwilling President William McKinley into war.

Material published to stir war fever included alleged Spanish atrocities in Cuba and actions against Americans involved in Cuba's war for independence. Hearst published reports about lurid "mutilation(s) of mothers and killing of babes, of the execution of suspects, (and) of imprisonment in filthy and fever-charged stockades." All too often the reports were the products of reporters' vivid imaginations. Hearst also sent the famous illustrator Frederic Remington and correspondent Richard Harding Davis to Cuba. When Remington found nothing there to draw, he reportedly sent Hearst this cable:

HEARST, JOURNAL, NEW YORK: EVERYTHING IS QUIET.

THERE IS NOT TROUBLE HERE. THERE WILL BE NO WAR.

WISH TO RETURN. REMINGTON.

Hearst then replied:

REMINGTON, HAVANA: PLEASE REMAIN. YOU FURNISH THE  
PICTURES AND I'LL FURNISH THE WAR. HEARST.<sup>32</sup>

Hearst was so enthusiastic for the war effort that he left New York to go to the scene after having hired a flotilla of boats for his writers, artists, and photographers. Borrowing from the technique used in the Mexican War, Hearst's flagship actually carried a printing plant on board. After a battle against some Spanish sailors, Hearst participated in the capture of a group of frightened sailors gathered on a beach.

A steam launch was lowered and run in to the shore. Hearst took off his trousers and leaped into the surf, brandishing a revolver. His party had no difficulty in forcing the twenty-six refugees to surrender; . . . and his yacht steamed proudly down the line of American battleships and delivered the bedraggled Spaniards. . . .<sup>33</sup>

In general, wartime enthusiasm found journalists giving little thought to the consequences of what they reported. Activities of journalists and the military demonstrated "the dangers of regarding war news as private property whose

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<sup>32</sup>Mott, American Journalism, p. 529. Citing Creelman's On the Great Highway. Hearst denied the entire incident.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid, p. 535.

ownership could be contested between the two. The property was too important to permit ownership by either."<sup>34</sup>

A critic of Hearst's and Pulitzer's newspapers, New York Evening Post editor Edwin Godkin, slammed both newspapers on February 19, 1898, just after their sensational coverage of the sinking of the Maine. Godkin wrote:

Nothing so disgraceful as the behavior of. . . these newspapers this week has been known in the history of American journalism. Gross misrepresentation of the facts, deliberate invention of tales calculated to excite the public, and wanton recklessness in the construction of headlines which even outdid these inventions, have combined to make the issues of the most widely circulated newspapers firebrands. . . . It is a crying shame that men should work such mischief simply in order to sell more newspapers.<sup>35</sup>

A most unusual incident occurred as the war ended. Correspondent Sylvester Scovel of the World was outraged when he learned that he had been excluded from the ceremonial victory photographs by General William Shafter. When the general refused to change his decision, Scovel tried to punch him in the nose but instead slapped his face -- all in front of the many dignitaries at the ceremony.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Mathews, Reporting, p. 206.

<sup>35</sup>Mott, American Journalism, p. 532.

<sup>36</sup>Mathews, Reporting, p. 150.



That unfortunate incident may have marked the end of an era for the U.S. press and military. Future war correspondents would experience a much sterner brand of censorship than the ineffectual brand they had enjoyed up until then -- punched noses or not.

## Chapter Three

### Censorship Comes of Age

Said the workman to the soldier: 'I will back you to the last. No more strikes for higher wages till the danger time is passed.' -- Edgar Guest<sup>1</sup>

#### World War I

World War I had changed the military-media relationship forever. "The cynically irresponsible Civil War journalism and the comic-opera journalism that had fanned the flames of the war with Spain were left behind," historian Herbert Brucker concluded.<sup>2</sup>

With the war's advent, a set of "voluntary" censorship regulations was imposed on March 24, 1917, by the State, War, and Navy departments. The regulations called for "no information, reports, or rumors attributing a policy to the

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<sup>1</sup>Harold Lavine and James Wechsler, War Propaganda and the United States, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Herbert Brucker, Freedom of Information (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), p. 175.

government in any international situation, not authorized by the President or a member of the Cabinet, be published without first consulting the Department of State." The following month President Woodrow Wilson created the Committee on Public Information (CPI) with a former muck-raking editor, George Creel, at its helm.<sup>3</sup>

With the atmosphere of censorship that prevailed throughout the war, historians have labeled the period as a dark age for freedom of information. Another reason for that label was the increased importance and sophistication of another form of information control -- propaganda. "Lead these people into war," President Woodrow Wilson said, "and they'll forget there ever was a thing called tolerance." And, it was George Creel who controlled both the censorship and propaganda arms of government that made Wilson's prophecy possible.

"No matter what the primary cause of America's entry into World War I may have been, propaganda was at least a secondary factor," wrote Harold Lavine and James Wechsler in a study for the Institute for Propaganda Analysis. Its emergence as a sophisticated art, with "a refinement of

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<sup>3</sup>Wiggins, p. 95.

techniques and the appropriation of new instruments for exerting stimuli," made it an essential ingredient to democratic governments facing warfare.<sup>4</sup>

The authors give a detailed account of how such propaganda can work. Governments must strive to suppress conflicts that are inherent to democracies so that unification of purpose can be realized. In that regard, there are major aims propagandists must consider. First is the recognition that "democracies cannot entirely suppress internal conflicts or else they would no longer be democracies." The role of the propagandist is to eliminate the conflicts by persuading people not to act on their individual impulses. The goal was to promote ideas that will lead the populace to go along with the propagandist's ideas for action.<sup>5</sup>

In the case of World War I, a major goal of the U.S. propaganda effort on the home front was to promote the war in general. But planners also realized it was necessary to conduct a concerted effort aimed at ensuring the required production of arms needed to fight the war. Quickly, strategies were devised to propagandize the labor force so workers

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<sup>4</sup>Lavine and Wechsler, War Propaganda, p. vii.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, p. 9.

would stay in line and complete the work with minimum delay. That effort was "perhaps the biggest job assigned to the CPI. . .," wrote James R. Mock and Cedric Larsen, authors of a book on propaganda from the World War I. And the committee took advantage of patriotic fervor to influence the various special interest groups (such as labor). Without too much need for guidance, the groups willingly echoed the propaganda themes of CPI, in the context of their own perceived interests. The National Association of Manufacturers, for example, backed the CPI by implementing the committee's ideas in its own publicity programs and activities.<sup>6</sup>

Creel's \$5 million effort was not only effective on labor, however. An article by journalist Raymond B. Fosdick entitled "America at War" aptly described the war fever -- inspired in part by Creel -- that gripped the nation.

We hated with a common hate that was exhilarating. The writer remembers. . . (a) meeting in New England, held under the auspices of a Christian Church -- God save the mark! A speaker demanded that the Kaiser, when captured, be boiled in oil, and the entire audience stood on chairs to scream its hysterical approval. This was the mood of madness we were in. . . that had seized us.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid. Citing James Mock and Cedric Larsen, Words that Won the War, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939).

<sup>7</sup>Knightley, The First Casualty, p. 123. Citing Foreign Affairs, January 1932.

The other important front for propaganda was enemy territory, where the goal was destruction of morale. A vivid example was a leaflet distribution effort behind enemy lines aimed at loyal but very hungry German soldiers. The technique took advantage of the soldiers' plight through the use of leaflets that proclaimed the strength of the allies in, of all things, nutritional terms. The leaflets described the rations the troops regularly received and were dropped by aircraft. Another similar ploy involved postcards that confined German war prisoners were allowed to send back home:

I have been taken prisoner by the Americans. Do not worry about me any more. Now I am getting two pounds of white bread a day, meat, oranges, chocolates, cigarets, and a roll of toilet paper, the same rations as issued to the American soldiers.<sup>8</sup>

To the German infantrymen who suffered from lack of food while slogging along in combat conditions of deprivation, the words' effects could be staggering. "It seemed useless to continue fighting against men as well fed as that. . . . (and) once further resistance seemed futile, it also seemed undesirable," Lavine and Weschler wrote.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Mock and Larsen, "Words That Won," p. 12. And Seldes, The Facts Are, p. 63.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

In its censorship role, Creel's CPI was greatly successful in its efforts, although it depended on the voluntary compliance of, for the most part, a very compliant press. Although Creel's theory was, in effect, "if newspapers were given enough worth-while material to fill their columns, there would be little need to issue detailed and stringent orders restricting the publication of other information," the reality was otherwise. Censorship was necessary. And, as both chief of the propaganda and censorship arms of government, Creel was faced with the "temptation to withhold or distort information because it was in conflict with (a) parallel propaganda effort." Theodore Koop wrote: "In one capacity. . . (he) appealed to editors, 'Please print this'; in the other he had to declare firmly, 'You can't print that.'"<sup>10</sup>

At the war front, American correspondents first had become involved with the American Expeditionary Force in France some 15 months after the United States had declared war. Accreditation rules were strict. Before their selection, correspondents had to appear personally before the

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<sup>10</sup>Theodore Koop, Weapon of Silence (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946), p. 159. Koop was a student of censorship. And, Juergen Arthur Heise, Minimum Disclosure -- How the Pentagon Manipulates the News (New York: W. W. Norton and Company), p. 55.

secretary of war to swear that they would "convey the truth to the people of the United States" and would not disclose facts that could aid the enemy. Each applicant was required to write, by hand, "an autobiographical sketch, which had to include an account of his work, his experience, his character, and his health. . . . (and) what he planned to do when he reached Europe and where he planned to go." A bond of \$10,000 was required to be posted by the correspondent's newspaper along with \$1,000 to pay in part for his logistical needs. It was understood that if the correspondent did not act according to the established rules in the field, the \$10,000 would not be reimbursed to his paper.<sup>11</sup>

Richard Harding Davis of the New York Tribune, writing of the German invasion of Louvain, Belgium, on Aug. 20, 1914, set a standard for reporting excellence:

The people of Louvain passed in an unending procession, women bareheaded, weepy, men carrying the children asleep on their shoulders, all hemmed in by the shadowy army of gray wolves. Once they were halted, and among them were marched a line of men. . . . These were on their way to be shot.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Knightley, The First Casualty, p. 124. Citing B. Hershey's "Son's o' Guns of August," Dateline.

<sup>12</sup>Louis L. Snyder and Richard B. Morris, eds., A Treasury of Great Reporting, 2nd ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962), pp. 319-320.



Another graphic report came from the New York Tribune's Will Irwin. It described the German use of chlorine gas on April 22, 1915, against the Allies -- a clear violation of the Hague Convention of 1907.

The attack. . . was preceded by the rising of a cloud of vapor, greenish gray and iridescent. That vapor settled to the ground like a swamp mist and drifted toward the French trenches on a brisk wind. Its effect on the French was a violent nausea and faintness, followed by an utter collapse.<sup>13</sup>

Irwin did not include in his dispatches that he himself had been a victim of the gas attack. He later wrote of the wartime hardships in his book, The Making of a Reporter:

Our train was going to load up and back out. I fell to and helped with the stretchers. In my absorption, I noticed a peculiar smell, to which I paid little attention. I found myself coughing and the air seemed to burn. . . . I was fighting illness. There was something the matter with my throat. . . . but it was no time or place to be ill. I dragged around haunting the hospitals until presently I felt a little better.<sup>14</sup>

Memorable reports notwithstanding, Phillip Knightley recounted the many stories that went unreported due to the stringent field censorship and the willingness of

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. Citing Irwin's The Making of a Reporter.

reporters to become part of the propaganda machine. Among the unwritten stories was the fact that some 160,000 men were on the front in 1915 without adequate arms -- but no one wrote about it. Nor was the extent of the lives lost known. Casualty figures had become so debased that they lost meaning. The Times of London explained the inadequacies:

The first reason for the inadequacy of the (war) correspondents was that they did not themselves understand what was happening. Obstacles were not eventually put in their way of getting right up to the front line -- providing they did not try to go there when anything in particular was happening; no limits were placed on the people to whom they could talk -- provided they did not talk to anyone who was busy! . . . Press officers directed their movements so closely that they hardly had any initiative in choosing where they should go. . . . Even if the correspondents did get any inkling of what conditions for the fighting soldier were really like, they were not necessarily encouraged to send them home: indeed such knowledge as was theirs inspired silence.<sup>15</sup>

In the states, newspaper employees were visibly involved in Creel's propaganda operation at home. The Chicago Tribune's Managing Editor James Keeley was the United States representative on the Inter-Allied Board for Propaganda. Walter Lippman served as a military intelligence officer and propaganda operative in France. In fact, Creel's

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<sup>15</sup>Knightly, The First Casualty, p. 110. Citing The History of the Times, vol. 4, p. 228.

staff included many journalists. Sociologist Michael Schudson wrote:

. . . (they) churned out 6,000 press releases, enlisted 75,000 'Four Minute Men' to deliver short speeches in movie theaters and other public places, and even enlisted the Boy Scouts to deliver copies of Wilson's addresses door to door.<sup>16</sup>

The Creel committee's efforts to stifle unpopular ideas were aided by laws that allowed the postmaster general and attorney general to restrict civil liberties. The Espionage Act of 1917, amended in 1918 to include sedition, "put muscle into prosecution for criminal words" and crushed elements of the socialist and pacifist press. Throughout the war, some 1,900 persons were prosecuted and some 100 papers were barred from the mails by Postmaster General Albert Burleson, who interpreted any opposition to the war as falling under the act. Not only did he prohibit items of actual criticism, he revoked permits based on what he felt would likely be future violations.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Michael Schudson, Discovering the News -- A Social History of American Newspapers, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1978), pp. 141-142. Citing George Creel in How We Advertised America, (New York: Harper and Row, 1920).

<sup>17</sup>Nelson and Teeter, Law, p. 37, citing U.S. ex. rel. Milwaukee Social Democratic Pub. Co. v. Burleson, 255 U.S. 407, 41 S.Ct. 352 (1921), in which The Milwaukee Leader took their case to the U.S. Supreme Court and lost.

## World War II

In many respects, censorship practices in World War II were greatly improved (at least from the government's perspective) over the experiences of World War I. With the emergence of propaganda as an absolute essential in warfare, President Franklin D. Roosevelt made the decision to separate the censorship and propaganda functions into different operational areas. This was partly due to ease of organization. But the president also wanted to keep censorship a function of military security rather than as an integrated part of the now strategic weapon -- propaganda.<sup>18</sup>

But the move toward a more organized censorship effort began even before the war, just as occurred before World War I. Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox requested that 5,000 radio, news, and photo editors begin voluntary censorship. On Dec. 31, 1940, he asked editors to avoid mention of movements of naval vessels and aircraft, naval personnel or mobilized reserves, Marine troop movements, new ships or aircraft, or construction projects ashore. Knox, a former newspaperman, asked in March for voluntary restraints on news of British ships being repaired in U.S. ports. They

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<sup>18</sup>Koop, Weapon, p. 160.

were in the United States under provisions of the Lend-Lease Act. Then, in September, the War and Navy departments disclosed they were also planning censorship policies for outgoing communications.<sup>19</sup>

When war was declared Dec. 8, 1941, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Navy put out a statement that called "attention to the reimposition of the provisions of the Espionage Act of 1918 (it had been repealed in 1921) and called for adherence to the regulations of 31 December 1940." The War Department also immediately restricted information on routes, schedules, and destinations of troops.<sup>20</sup>

Roosevelt, acting 11 days later under the first War Powers Act, created the U.S. Office of Censorship and made a masterful choice in the appointment of journalist Byron Price as official government censor. Price, executive news editor of The Associated Press, was widely respected by his peers. Roosevelt explained why the order was necessary in four main points:

- (1). . . to withhold some news at its source.
- (2). . . to set a watch upon the nation's borders so no information might reach the enemy.

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<sup>19</sup>Wiggins, Freedom, p. 96.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid, p. 97.

(3). . . to prohibit domestic publication of some types of information.

(4) The government was requesting the press and radio to abstain voluntarily from dissemination of detailed information of certain kinds, such as reports of the movement of vessels and troops.<sup>21</sup>

For the voluntary censorship to work smoothly, firm guidelines were determined to be necessary. They were to be based on the voluntary withholding of information that the armed services felt would be damaging to national security. A Code of Wartime Practices for the nation's press was issued in mid-January (another soon followed for broadcasters). The codes became, in effect, the "bibles" journalists used to determine their coverage. They were so effective that if journalists erred in regard to the codes, it was more often in over-suppression of information rather than publishing stories harmful to the war effort.

The codes specifically warned against publishing news on various topics that ranged from shipping, aircraft, troops, fortifications, production and armaments, and weather. No penalties were set for violations, however. With the atmosphere of blind patriotism at the time, penalties were not considered necessary.

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

Early in World War II estimates were that more than 10,000 newsmen were covering the war.<sup>22</sup> However, U.S. censorship practices under field conditions were not altogether accepted by reporters as infallible or just in their application. Reporters in the Pacific theater controlled by Gen. Douglas C. MacArthur bitterly complained that the army's information officers were more inspired to glorify the general's image rather than honestly detailing the facts. Even after fighting with Japan had ended for some two months, MacArthur continued to censor dispatches of then-enraged Allied correspondents. His main aim was not security as much as it was to clamp down on criticism of his occupation policies, reporters argued. Koop described the situation:

(Correspondents') irritation reached a climax on the day when Emperor Hirohito called on General MacArthur. American troops with bayonets formed a guard around the Embassy that kept reporters at a distance. And at the same hour Brigadier General Le Grande A. Diller, MacArthur's public relations officer, held a press conference at which he issued a brief statement about the Emperor's call.

But the correspondents were not permitted at the time to write about the guards with bayonets. They complained to General Diller and asked why such details had been stopped. In the stories which they filed after censorship ended, they quoted the General as replying:

'Call it whimsy, if you like.'<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Lavine and Weschler, War Propaganda, p. 153.

<sup>23</sup>Koop, Weapon, p. 271.

Yet reporters on the European front with General Dwight D. Eisenhower felt the treatment they received was relatively fair. Eisenhower often briefed reporters on the most intimate details of upcoming battles and trusted reporters to an extreme. "Public opinion wins wars," Eisenhower told a meeting of editors. "I have always considered as quasi-staff officers, correspondents accredited to my headquarters."<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, with the highly structured censorship conditions that prevailed, correspondents had none of the hopes they might have cherished in earlier conflicts when the first journalist to report a communique had himself a "scoop." Even when selected for an important assignment in World War II, reporters generally represented a press "pool" and later had to share with colleagues the information they had gathered.

Some specialized reporting was evident, however. No account of World War II war correspondence -- however concise -- is complete without recounting the work of an individual reporter who had no peers in his specialty, Ernie Pyle. Sentimental as he was, Pyle's reports from the fronts penetrated the human side of war with frankness and clarity.

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<sup>24</sup>Lavine and Wechsler. And, Knightley, The First Casualty, p. 315. Quoting a April 25, 1944 Reuters' report.



He captured the essence of the common soldier. Pyle was unconcerned with reporting events from the perspective of the "Big Picture," Mathews wrote. He preferred reporting stories from a "worm's-eye view." A memorable Pyle dispatch came from North Africa, where he had accompanied a war-weary infantry unit. He wrote:

The men were walking. They were fifty feet apart for dispersal. Their walk was slow, for they were dead weary, as a person could tell even when looking at them from behind. Every line and sag of their bodies spoke their inhuman exhaustion. On their shoulders and backs they carried heavy steel tripods, machine-gun barrels, leaden boxes of ammunition. Their feet seemed to sink into the ground from the overload they were bearing. . . .

Their faces were black and unshaved. They were young men, but the grime and whiskers and exhaustion made them look middle-aged. In their eyes as they passed was no hatred, no excitement, no despair, no tonic of their victory -- there was just the simple expression of being there as if they had been there doing that forever, . . . It was one long tired line of antlike men. There was agony in your heart and you felt almost ashamed to look at them.<sup>25</sup>

Novelist John Steinbeck, who also served as a correspondent, gave an excellent account of the field conditions reporters had to contend with. He described censorship as something reporters not only went along with -- they abetted

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<sup>25</sup>Mathews, Reporting, pp. 192, 287. Citing Ernie Pyle's Here is Your War.

it. "There was a general feeling that unless the home front was carefully protected from the whole account of what war was like, it might panic," he wrote, after the war.<sup>26</sup> Practical pressures, too, had their effect:

Certain people could not be criticized or even questioned. The foolish reporter who broke the rules would not be printed at home and in addition would be put out of the theater by the command, and a correspondent with no theater has no job. . . . Gradually it became a part of all of us that the truth about anything was automatically secret and that to trifle with it was to interfere. . . . By this I don't mean that the correspondents were liars. They were not. . . . It is in the things not mentioned that the untruth lies.<sup>27</sup>

Price also had no regrets. After the war he wrote that censorship had done what it should have -- it prevented the enemy "from learning movements of our troops and ships, and how rapidly planes, tanks, and guns are coming down the production line," he wrote. Its offensive implications were valuable, too, in learning of enemy plans. The examination of mail and cables often turned up valuable intelligence data which was "the pay-off of the whole. . . system."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>John Steinbeck, Once There Was A War, (New York: The Viking Press, 1958), p. xiii.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Davis and Price, War Information, p. 56-57.

On the other information offensive front -- the propaganda war -- Roosevelt appointed another well-known journalist, Elmer Davis, to direct the American effort. A veteran of The New York Times and a commentator for the Columbia Broadcasting System, Davis described his role in altruistic terms. He stated:

It is the job of OWI (Office of War Information) not only to tell the American people how the war is going, but where it is going and where it came from -- its nature, origins, how our government is conducting it and what (besides national survival) our government hopes to get out of a victory.<sup>29</sup>

OWI, created in June of 1942, had a news bureau budget of a million dollars with 250 employees (including 50 reporters working full time in its pressroom). The OWI acted as a "city desk" for war news, handling some 60 percent of the war-related stories, the rest left to other government and military agencies. Emery wrote: ". . . news releases relating significantly to the war effort or dealing with activities affecting more than one government agency had to pass through the OWI News Bureau." The effort did not end with "news" only, however. Other services included cartoons, photos, features, weekly digests, and filler material, along

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<sup>29</sup>Emery, The Press, p. 338. Citing Davis' "OWI Has A Job," Public Opinion Quarterly, VII (Spring 1943), 8.

with "background information concerning desired propaganda and informational objectives of the government. . . given to editorial writers, cartoonists, and columnists."<sup>30</sup>

Strategy overseas was more complex than had been the case in the first world war, with the refinement of radio communications technology and the advent of the Voice of America making psychological warfare behind enemy lines possible through the power of broadcasting. The overseas office of OWI received some 30,000 words a day of Teletyped information from its United States bureau to use as it desired. At its peak in 1943, the overseas bureau cabled some 65,000 words a day to all parts of the world and mailed thousands of feature stories and photographs, as well.<sup>31</sup>

But Thomas C. Sorenson, a former director of the U.S. Information Agency, wrote that the OWI's operations were not altogether harmonious. He maintained that Roosevelt -- regardless of what he said at the time -- saw the OWI as more of a censorship adjunct (just as Creel's committee had been). As a result, all too often the OWI did not have the necessary information it needed to be a truly effective tool

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid. By 1943, OWI's annual budget was \$36 million with \$27 million funding overseas operations.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid, p. 339.

on the psychological warfare front. Sorenson cited a former OWI senior official, Wallace Carroll, who after the war, had written that "while Americans attained considerable skill in the use of propaganda as an instrument of war, they failed completely to develop the arts of persuasion as an instrument of foreign policy." The information gap was a key element in the failure, Sorenson contended, partly because Davis did not rate the presidential favor that would make him privy to information that his predecessor, Creel, had received in World War I.<sup>32</sup>

Whether or not the propaganda effort was as effective as it could have been, Koop contended that Price's censorship operation was a success, although he admitted it too had its share of imperfections.

It was in suppressing such prime military information -- D-Day plans, the Yamamoto ambush, and the Kamikaze attacks are only three examples among many -- that Censorship fulfilled its greatest defensive mission. . . . Their disclosure could have changed the entire course of the war. The fact that they were not disclosed reflects everlasting honor on the American press and radio.

He concluded that Price's post-war congressional testimony

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<sup>32</sup>Thomas C. Sorenson, The Word War, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1968), p. 12. Citing Wallace Carroll, Persuade or Perish, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948). Sorenson provides a lengthy account of internal OWI squabbling.

before Congress was correct: that if results of the censorship operation "could be measured in dollars and cents, . . . censorship would represent the best investment in security ever made by the United States government."<sup>33</sup>

### **The Korean Conflict**

In the Korean conflict, war correspondents performed their roles under difficult circumstances, both from the perspective of personal safety and because of the imposition of strict censorship. Advancing technology brought a new mix of correspondents to the scene. While news agencies and newspapers had individual correspondents there, some 17 reporters represented U.S. radio and television networks. Magazines, too, sent some 50 accredited reporters. Fifty cameramen served the needs of the various media covering the war. As in World War II, coverage was often provided from

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<sup>33</sup>Koop, Weapon, p. 246. In 1943, American intercepts of Japanese coded messages had allowed U.S. fighter planes to down a plane carrying Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, commander-in-chief of the Japanese Navy. The United States did not want the truth known since the incident appeared, on the surface, to be a stroke of luck. Had the Japanese learned the U.S. had planned the attack, they would have realized their communications had been compromised.

reporting and picture "pools" as correspondents shared information they had gathered while covering operations in the field. The suddenness of the war and its inaccessibility at the beginning had left news organizations scrambling to mobilize and deploy people to the scene. It took two days to get a dozen reporters in country -- they arrived just in time to cover the fall of Seoul.<sup>34</sup>

Truman's announcement on June 27, 1950, left no doubt that American involvement in the conflict would become a reality. His official statement said:

The attack upon Korea makes it plain that communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed intervention and war.

In these circumstances I have ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support.<sup>35</sup>

With the decision to enter the conflict made, the American press was quick to unify behind the president. Editorial page opinions shifted in that regard -- even though Truman's action was taken without a declaration of war by Congress.

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<sup>34</sup>Mott, American Journalism, p. 848. And, Keun Youn, "The Korean War: Its Coverage and Editorial Opinions," (M.A. thesis, University of Missouri, 1964), p. 11.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid, p. 26. Citing Oscar T. Barck, Jr., America in the World, (New York: The World Publishing Co., 1961).

Some 600 news stories were transmitted to Tokyo from July 29 to Aug. 2, 1950, according to records kept by the Army Signal Corps. Many of those stories were written by the hundreds of free-lance reporters who were on the scene, representing "grass-roots" newspapers. Most, however, were not novice reporters. Employers were reluctant to hire inexperienced reporters because of the great pool of experienced reporters who remained from World War II.<sup>36</sup>

The Korean conflict was different for correspondents from World War II, however, both in practical and philosophical terms, historian Mott wrote. Situations faced by the correspondents were often more dangerous than they had experienced in the previous wars because there were no established defensive lines. Accompanying the troops under such conditions often caused mass confusion. Often cases of enemy infiltration, ambush, and sniper fire ruled the battlefields and, just as troop losses were heavy, so were the casualties among journalists. Some 19 reporters, 11 of them Americans, were killed in action during the war.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Ray Erwin, "200 Seek War Beat Despite Deprivations, Editor and Publisher, August 12, 1950, p. 7.

<sup>37</sup>Emery, The Press, p. 344. And, Mott, American Journalism, p. 846.



Two descriptions of conditions in Korea were provided to Editor and Publisher by Walter Simmons of the Chicago Tribune and Jack Burby of United Press. Simmons wrote:

(Journalists) now covering the war in Korea are doubtless the hardest working, dirtiest and most flea-bitten gang of press corps assembled anywhere in recorded history.

Their wives and children would flee screaming in horror if they could see any of these apparitions shambling along, unshaven, scratching himself, plastered with dust and wondering vaguely, where he could scrounge a can of C-rations.<sup>38</sup>

Burby wrote:

This foot-slogging routine is the most miserable, scared existence you could imagine. There's nothing you can do but hug the dirt and pray and thank God they don't have an air force. . . . This sure as hell has been a bloody experience.<sup>39</sup>

A meager communications system often frustrated reporters. Until late July, the only means the press had to get its stories to Tokyo for world distribution was an army radio-telephone circuit that reporters were forced to share with the military. Even when correspondents finally got access to the "quavering line," there was a limit of only three minutes imposed on their calls. Congestion was

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<sup>38</sup>"Moore Was Shot While Aiding Wounded," Editor and Publisher, November 4, 1950, p. 13.

<sup>39</sup>Ray Erwin, "200 Seek War Beat Despite Deprivations," Editor and Publisher, August 12, 1950, p. 7.

evident even after two supplemental Teletype lines were finally installed in late July. Delays in transmitting stories often were up to 12 hours long.<sup>40</sup>

In general, American media were passive to censorship practices during the Korean conflict, although there were numerous "skirmishes to keep military censorship from expanding beyond national security to cover the self-interest of battlefield commanders."<sup>41</sup>

At first, General MacArthur proclaimed that field censorship in the world war fashion to be outmoded and stated that he believed self-censorship was a wiser choice, according to a letter he wrote to the Chicago Sun-Times on July 15, 1950:

In the Korean operations it has been my purpose to leave (censorship) responsibility where it rightfully belongs -- in the hands of the correspondents, editors and publishers concerned.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Youn, "The Korean War." Citing The APME Redbook: 1950.

<sup>41</sup>Sandman, Rubin, and Sachsman, Media, p. 461.

<sup>42</sup>General MacArthur caused press outrage when he left newspaper and magazine correspondents behind on his Sept. 15, 1950, landing at Inchon. "The only correspondents well cared for were the four news agency chiefs, who were (MacArthur's) personal guests. . . on the command ship McKinley. They were provided with special facilities and with telephones direct to Tokyo, so that the official view of events would get quick and wide distribution." [Knightley, The First Casualty, p. 341. Citing Reginald Thompson, Cry Korea, (London: Macdonald, 1951), p. 36.]

But disputes arose, nevertheless, concerning cases in which the military and media had different interpretations of what constituted security, unwarranted criticism and what impaired morale and did not. Correspondents complained that the military's voluntary code was too complicated to follow and many "repeatedly asked, without success, for military censorship so they could have some uniform guidance." After intense criticism erupted over MacArthur's drive against the North Koreans (which many historians have concluded brought the Communist Chinese into the war) MacArthur abruptly granted their wish -- but not for the reasons of uniformity that the reporters had wanted. MacArthur's move authorized censorship of all dispatches using standards that would judge news reports not only on security, but on whether they might injure military morale or embarrass the government. Reporters who appealed his decision were told that MacArthur's basic objections that had spawned his decision were to dispatches that had reflected troop disillusionment with the war.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>"MacArthur Says Press 'Demanded' Censorship," Editor and Publisher, January 20, 1951, p. 7. MacArthur also justified the move based on a resolution that top radio and newspaper executives had authored in December of 1951. That group had concluded that security of information was the responsibility of the military, not the press.

Whatever the general's reasons truly were, Marguerite Higgins, a leader among journalists in Korea and the war's lone woman correspondent, was one who protested the strengthened censorship. She described factors she felt had caused the disagreements between the military and media in a book she wrote after the war:

. . . so long as our government requires the backing of an aroused and informed public opinion, so long as we are a democracy, it is necessary to tell the hard 'brushing truth' (sic).

It is best to admit panic among our soldiers and so bring home the great need for better training; it is best to admit that bazookas don't even tickle the big Soviet tanks and make known the urgent need for better and more weapons; it is best to tell graphically the moments of desperation and horror endured by an unprepared army, so the American public will demand that it not (sic) happen again.<sup>44</sup>

After Truman fired MacArthur for publicly disagreeing with the U.S. policy of "limited warfare" in Korea, the general's departure brought about a restoration of some of the measures of press freedom that reporters had initially enjoyed in the war. A December 1952 decision to place

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<sup>44</sup>Marguerite Higgins, War in Korea, (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1951), p. 127. Higgins, of the New York Herald Tribune, had initially been banned from Korea. Maj. Gen. Walton Walker, commander of the Eighth Army, sent her back to Tokyo "because he disapproved of women correspondents." MacArthur intervened on her behalf and she was allowed back in.

military public relations officers in charge of censorship operations rather than have that duty remain a function of intelligence officers, also helped to calm the situation.<sup>45</sup>

Korea, author Knightley has concluded (with the aid of hindsight), was not the war correspondents' brightest experience. Because journalists became so involved in reporting the war in terms of troop gains and losses, they never put things into proper perspective. He wrote:

. . . although they showed professional courage on the battlefield, they failed to show equal moral courage in questioning what the war was all about. . . . Under pressure to prove their patriotism, they got on (the government's) side and went along with the United States military's view of how the war should be reported.<sup>46</sup>

The same pressures would come to the surface in the Vietnam experience in the 1960s and 1970s, but in that war correspondents would resist becoming the "team players" that Korean correspondents had remained. It can be argued that the issues that grew out of the two wars so closely paralleled one another that the military-media relationship

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<sup>45</sup>Sandman, Rubin, and Sachsman, Media, p. 461. And, Emery, The Press, p. 345.

<sup>46</sup>Knightley, The First Casualty, pp. 355-356.

was bound to change.

The similarities are striking. Both the Korea and Vietnam actions grew to be very unpopular. Both were "undeclared" wars. The issues in each were not clearly distinguishable in military and political meanings. A dichotomy grew in Korea with the military wanting to over-protect information for national security reasons, while the press wanted to publish it for its political implications, historian Brucker argued. The result was a growing tension between the government and press in which ". . . much was published that were the better left quiet; and much (was) suppressed that were better published."<sup>47</sup>

President Harry S. Truman's decision to begin an information "classification" system brought new tensions to the forefront, too. An advisory board comprised of personnel from the State Department and the military had recommended such a system be implemented to include the classification of information that might cause "serious administrative embarrassment" to the government. Truman's executive order authorized all federal agencies to categorize and label information as "top secret," "secret," "confidential," or

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<sup>47</sup>Brucker, Freedom, p. 171.

"restricted." These guidelines put power in government hands to stamp classification designations on documents that could cover up a multitude of personally and politically embarrassing information. This growing government secrecy only served to further divide information-seeking members of the press and those who controlled that information in government.<sup>48</sup>

Korea found military leaders taking a hard line on the need for reporters to be involved at all. One senior military officer bluntly concluded:

If I had my own way there would be two official communiques issued about the war; one would announce the beginning and the other at the time of the final victory.<sup>49</sup>

In Vietnam, these new tensions would reshape the military-media relationship. They would mark an end to the general cooperation and trust of military and media in earlier wars, which had already begun to unravel in Korea. Conflict and distrust would rule the military-media relationship in Vietnam.

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<sup>48</sup>Wiggins, Freedom, pp. 100-101. And Carol M. Barker and Mathew H. Fox, Classified Files: Yellowing Pages, (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1972), p. 12.

<sup>49</sup>Youn, The Korean War, p. 122. Citing Robert C. Miller, "News Censorship in Korea," Nieman Reports (July 1952), p. 3.

## Chapter Four

### Vietnam and the Adversary Press

Anyone who commits American forces to a ground war in Asia ought to have his head examined.

-- General Douglas C. MacArthur<sup>1</sup>

When CBS News broadcast a documentary on Jan. 23, 1982, charging that Gen. William C. Westmoreland, former commander of U.S. troops in Vietnam, had directed a "conspiracy" to falsify wartime estimates of enemy strength, an old bitter battle began again in the nation's news circles. That 90-minute CBS broadcast, "The Uncounted Enemy, A Vietnam Deception," had been produced by George Crile, whom Westmoreland and many of his associates later accused of having committed a journalistic hatchet job. Westmoreland had demanded 45 minutes of unedited air time to counter Crile's charges, but CBS refused to give in.

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<sup>1</sup>Margret Hofmann, Vietnam Viewpoints: A Handbook for Concerned Citizens, (Austin, Texas: published by author, 1968), p. 139.



Later, however, a TV Guide investigative report leveled charges against CBS that backed General Westmoreland's point of view that, indeed, he had been victimized. The article, "Anatomy of a Smear," stated that CBS had violated its own journalistic standards of objectivity and fairness in preparation of the Westmoreland documentary. An internal investigation was then conducted by a CBS senior news producer, Burton Benjamin. He filed a 59-page report that concluded the broadcast had indeed been flawed in 11 specific areas, the most serious one having been the "failure to prove the contention of (a) 'conspiracy'" by Westmoreland and aides. Benjamin also stated that subjectivity in CBS's selection of persons to be interviewed had flawed the program. He cited instances in which the "'coddling' of sympathetic 'witnesses'" who appeared in the documentary may have flavored the program's results.<sup>2</sup>

The controversy over the Benjamin report and General Westmoreland's subsequent libel action against CBS (which he later dropped when malice could not be proved) reflected the various conflicts between the military and media that

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<sup>2</sup>Burton Benjamin, The CBS Benjamin Report, (Washington: The Media Institute, 1984), p. vii. And, "Anatomy of a Smear," TV Guide, 29 May-4 June 1984, p. 3.

grew out of the Vietnam war.

The parallels are clear since the issues in both the CBS-Westmoreland imbroglio and the Vietnam era of press-military relations raise many of the same questions. Were the media unfair, or even vindictive, toward the military (or Westmoreland)? Were the government's spokesmen (including Westmoreland) deceitful, and therefore deserving candidates for the media attention they received? For that matter, perhaps the conflicts between media and military are grounded in a lack of understanding of what their wartime roles should have been in relationship with one another. These questions, among others, will be addressed here.

### **The "Living Room" War**

Vietnam has been labeled the "living room" war. It came into American homes nightly via television with the television network anchors intoning the latest in a mounting toll of body counts. The gruesome filmed footage served as a backdrop to the saturation coverage of the war. The electronic "pictures" of television made an even more vivid impression than had the black-and-white photographs that

had come from the desolate Korean conflict. This technological communications achievement, which it was in one sense, made Vietnam the first war in which U.S. citizens were confronted daily with images of death and destruction their troops suffered and inflicted half a world away.<sup>3</sup>

Some 58,000 Americans were killed and another 303,000 wounded during the decade-long war. Estimates of Americans who remain missing range from 2,500 to 5,000. The United States spent some \$140 billion on the battlefields in Vietnam, a nation with a land mass only slightly larger than North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia combined. Even today, according to Veterans Administration estimates, some 500,000 to 800,000 combat veterans suffer from Vietnam-related readjustment problems. It was also the first American war that generated substantial student protest in the form of sit-ins and found large numbers heading to Canada, Sweden, France and Denmark to avoid the fight. "It is the first war we lost, the longest war we fought -- and it tripped up the country like no war since the Civil War," journalist-historian Stanley Karnow has said. It was a war that left a legacy of bitterness and cynicism for a generation of Americans. Many of its participants returned home

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<sup>3</sup>See Michael Arlen, The Living Room War, (New York: Tower, 1969).

to what they considered an ungrateful country -- a country whose draft-exempt men used "babykillers" and other pejorative terms to describe men their own age who went to war.<sup>4</sup>

John Kerry, now a United States senator from Massachusetts, recalled his Vietnam homecoming this way:

There I was, a week out of the jungle, flying from San Francisco to New York. I fell asleep and woke up yelling, probably a nightmare. The other passengers moved away from me -- a reaction I noticed more and more in the months ahead. The country didn't give a shit about the guys coming back, or what they'd gone through. The feeling toward them was, 'Stay away -- don't contaminate us with whatever you've brought back from Vietnam.'<sup>5</sup>

Navy Capt. Leighton Smith, now commander of the U.S. Navy carrier America, described his outlook before and after his Vietnam experience:

I graduated from the Academy in '63, great football team, uniform looked sharp, married a terrific-looking girl from Columbia, South Carolina, and I had the world by the balls. . . . Then Vietnam came. . . we all slipped home without telling anyone and got an unlisted phone number because of the obscene calls.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"The War America Can't Forget," by James McGregor, St. Louis Globe-Democrat, April 30, 1985, p. 1. And, "The 1960s: A Welter of Conflicting Legacies," by Myra MacPherson, The Washington Post, April 15, 1985, pp. 1, 18-19.

<sup>5</sup>Stanley Karnow, Vietnam: A History, (New York: The Viking Press, 1983), p. 27.

<sup>6</sup>Steven Strasser, "Can We Fight A Modern War," Newsweek, July 5, 1984, p. 38.

### **An Uncertain Strategy**

What made matters even worse in terms of dissent and confusion at home was the confusion and lack of clear direction of U.S. goals in Vietnam. Even the generals were unable to explain the aim of the fighting, Karnow wrote:

The only measure of success was the 'body count,' the pile of enemy slaughtered -- a futile standard that made the war as glorious as an abattoir. So homecoming troops were often denounced for bestiality and berated for the defeat -- or simply shunned.<sup>7</sup>

Just what the faults of Vietnam strategy were are still hotly disputed. But clearly this was a military conflict in which the United States repeatedly won its major battles but failed to win the war. Retired Army Col. Harry G. Summers Jr., a Vietnam infantry officer who sat on the U.S. Army War College faculty, has offered this opinion:

In 1966 and 1967, we had the finest Army the United States Army ever put in the field. . . . But the successes at the tactical level weren't being reflected at the strategic level. Things just didn't seem to be clicking. . . . By the late 1960s and early 1970s, it became obvious that (the fighting) was to no avail. . . . We just weren't pulling it off, and the loss of public support exacerbated the feeling that it was all for nothing.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Karnow, Vietnam, p. 27.

<sup>8</sup>"Voices Remembering the War," The Washington Post, April 16, 1985, p. A9.

The failure of American presidents to declare war in Vietnam or to activate reserve forces led to a lack of national commitment as well. As a result, wrote veteran Washington Post military correspondent George C. Wilson, the Army suffered both structurally and emotionally. "With no reserve specialists to draw upon, the Army used up most of the experienced sergeants it had in uniform," he explained. General E. C. Meyer, a former Army Chief of Staff, has said the lack of reserve forces integrated into the action led to the "virtual destruction" of the noncommissioned-officer corps -- "the glue holding the Army together." Similarly, Gen. Creighton W. Abrams has said that the Army should never again fight a war "one year at a time without access to critically needed reservists."<sup>9</sup>

With the unravelled NCO corps, other problems plagued leaders in the field. Accounts of "fraggings" or assassinations of officers and NCOs by enlisted men provided evidence that the relationship between commanders and troops had been poisoned. Troops high on drugs were "a way of life in some units," Wilson wrote.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>"War's Lessons Struck Home: Nation's Support Crucial on Distant Battlefields," by George C. Wilson, The Washington Post, April 16, 1985, p. A9.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

Alan Vanneman, now an editor of a Washington, D.C., employee training publication, served in a combat artillery unit in Vietnam in 1968-69. Vanneman wrote that the average soldier in his unit had no idea why he was fighting and viewed the South Vietnamese with as much contempt as he felt for the enemy.

The accepted attitude toward the Vietnamese, the people for whom we were supposed to be fighting, was contempt. Many of the men I served with said that the Vietnamese 'ain't human.' Use of the term 'gook' for all Vietnamese was not restricted to a handful of ignorant bigots, but was universally used by all our soldiers, even Oriental Americans.<sup>11</sup>

Gen. William Peers, who served in Vietnam's Central Highlands and led the My Lai massacre investigation, has said he believes a more forceful approach without conflicting political limitations would have produced victory:

We fought a war of gradualism, a piecemeal approach. . . . Left to (our) own devices (we) would have developed a winning strategy. Westmoreland had at least one hand tied behind his back. . . . His daily bombing list of targets in North Vietnam had to be submitted for approval. Too much authority was put in civilian hands.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>"Using Grenada to Purge Vietnam," by Alan Vanneman, The Washington Post, January 14, 1984, p. H5. And, "Fighting Back," Wilson, The Washington Post, April 16, 1985, p. A1.

<sup>12</sup>"Vietnam Revisited: America's Longest War Goes On," by Stewart McBride, The Christian Science Monitor, March 3, 1983, p. B3.

Others, too, have criticized the role that civilian leaders played in Vietnam. While the use of modern technology in the war produced new tactics such as the quick maneuvers by "light forces" (thanks to helicopter transport), improvements in communications provided a mixed blessing. Having the capability to contact the war theater instantly often tempted civilian leaders to coordinate or direct fighting strategy personally. This was perceived as needless meddling by military leaders. "(President Johnson) himself could pick bombing targets and make other battlefield decisions that undercut the authority of field commanders," Wilson wrote. That, and political turmoil that caused indecisiveness in Washington, left tactical combat unit commanders wondering what their true strategic objectives were. Events in Vietnam "demonstrated painfully that success depends heavily on setting clear objectives," Wilson explained, citing a Vietnam battalion commander's apt analogy of how such policies hampered activity in the field:

Remember, we're watchdogs you unchain to go eat up the burglar. Don't ask us to be mayors or sociologists worrying about hearts and minds. Let us eat up the burglar our own way and then put us back on the chain.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>"War's Lessons," Wilson, p. A9.



### A Battle for Public Opinion

Other students of the period, including many in the military, contend that the growth of a more adversarial and critical press unleashed or created negative public opinion for the war at home. Sociologist Schudson wrote that the war finally "drained the reservoir of trust between the government and the press," a reservoir that had long been leaking. It came as a gradual shift of the media from their unquestioningly patriotic role in the World Wars to a more adversarial and critical position that had found its earliest roots in the Korean conflict. A press that had once been only too willing to cover up stories for reasons of perceived patriotism had increasingly grown wary of government officials, Schudson wrote.<sup>14</sup>

A furor that served well to illustrate the shift involved Arthur Sylvester, President John F. Kennedy's Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. Sylvester, in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis

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<sup>14</sup>Schudson, Discovering the News, p. 172. Schudson cites covered up or non-reported news stories to include: aerial spying over the Soviet Union (and the truth of the U-2 incident); "Project Argus," a government program involving the detonation of nuclear devices in space; and, the training of Cuban exiles in Florida before the Bay of Pigs invasion and the invasion itself, among other stories.

of 1962, proclaimed that the government had a "right to lie" as an end to justify various means. In a speech before a journalism fraternity he said: "I think the inherent right of government to lie -- to save itself when faced with nuclear disaster -- is basic, basic." Sylvester had earlier expressed similar ideas:

In the kind of world we live in, the generation of news by actions taken by the government becomes one weapon in a strained situation. The results justify the methods we use.<sup>15</sup>

While in general the press had long felt it was correct to cooperate with government in withholding information from public view under certain conditions -- most often for reasons of national security -- what Sylvester suggested was beyond tolerable limits for journalists. Schudson explained:

It was perhaps bad for the government to keep information from the press by dodging; it was certainly bad for. . . government to announce its 'right' to lie. There was at least this virtue to hypocrisy when the government lied while claiming to be truthful: that if the press discovered the lie, it could embarrass the government. . . . Sylvester . . . placed the government beyond embarrassment.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid, and p. 172. Citing Martin Gershen, "The 'Right to Lie'," Columbia Journalism Review 5, (Winter, 1966-67): 14-16.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid, p. 173.

Sylvester's actions on a trip to Vietnam in 1963 did little to help the already faltering relationship officials there had with members of the press. Sylvester told correspondents gathered for a meeting that they

. . . had a patriotic duty to disseminate only information that made the United States look good. A network television correspondent said, 'Surely, Arthur, you don't expect the American press to be the handmaidens of government.' 'That's exactly what I expect,' came the reply . . . . (another reporter) raised the problem . . . about the credibility of American officials. (Sylvester) responded. . . 'Look, if you think any American official is going to tell you the truth, then you're stupid. Did you hear that? -- stupid.'

Sylvester later denied the conversation had ever taken place, but nine correspondents swore that it did.<sup>17</sup>

It was the military's briefings labeled the "Five O'Clock Follies" that led journalists to suspect that Sylvester's philosophy "had actually become everyday government practice," Schudson wrote. A combination of factors helped contribute to this perception. Perhaps the most important of them was the difficulty government spokesmen had in adequately dealing with information about the war. Often misled themselves, as a result of placing too

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<sup>17</sup>William McGaffin and Erwin Kroll, Anything but the Truth, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1968), p.86.

much faith in intelligence reports from the field, the military spokesmen "retailed" bad information to reporters.<sup>18</sup>

John Mecklin, chief adviser on news media relations to the U.S. ambassador to Vietnam, described what he considered to be "the root of the problem":

. . . (it was) the fact that much of what the newsmen took to be lies was exactly what the mission genuinely believed and was reporting to Washington. Events were to prove that the mission itself was unaware of how badly the war was going, operating in a world of illusion. Our feud with the newsmen was an angry symptom of bureaucratic sickness. . . . We made the error of basing critical judgments of both the political and military situations on information provided mainly by the Vietnamese government. This was sometimes prettied up to keep Americans happy. Mostly it was just plain wrong.<sup>19</sup>

A military press officer in the thick of the Saigon situation said the perceived dishonesty had devastated the military-press relationship: "There was so much bad blood -- on both sides. We briefed every day and it was hot. . . . They didn't believe anything we said." But Jerry W.

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<sup>18</sup>Schudson, Discovering the News, p. 173. Citing John Mecklin, Mission in Torment, (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1965), p. 113.

<sup>19</sup>Glenn MacDonald, Report or Distort?, (New York: Exposition Press, 1973), p. 17.

Friedheim, who served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, has said that reporters failed to give proper weight to the wartime confusion:

It was hotter in Saigon for military briefers who could not answer policy questions than it was for me at the Pentagon. . . . I briefed every day for six years and didn't lie.<sup>20</sup>

One of the most memorable briefers at the "Follies" was Maj. Jerre Forbus, who is credited with the development in 1972 of what then became the favorite "stock answer to the question of why there were no answers to questions." The phrase he developed as rationale for holding back was this -- "Protection of Information." When later interviewed on how he had come to think of such an adroit response, Forbus explained, "'It just come out of my ass up there on stage (sic).'" He also said that Pentagon officials listening on a specially devised radio set that enabled them to monitor the Saigon briefings immediately wired their special congratulations to him when they first heard him use the response.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Stephen Hess, The Government/Press Connection: Press Officers and Their Offices, (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1984), pp. 26, 112.

<sup>21</sup>Perry Dean Young, "From Saigon to Salvador: Revisionism Reconsidered," The Quill, May 1983, p. 13.

### Reporters in Vietnam

From the point of view of the journalists who covered the Vietnam war, the government ineptitude and misinformation that Mecklin and others have described left little alternative but to harbor an attitude of intense skepticism, wrote correspondent Glenn MacDonald in his post-war book Report or Distort? As early in the conflict as 1962 and 1963 journalists working in Vietnam "felt that the U.S. mission deliberately lied to them about the program of the war. . . . charg(ing) that 'defeats' were portrayed as 'victories' and that American policy camouflaged the shortcomings of the Diem regime."<sup>22</sup>

The difference in this outlook from attitudes held in the past, Wall Street Journal columnist Vermont Royster wrote, was in the degree of skepticism held and in terms of the role reporters perceived they should play:

We were cynical about much in government, yes. We were skeptical about many government programs, yes. We thought of ourselves as the watchdogs of government, yes. We delighted in expos(ing). . . bungling and corruption, yes. But enemies of government, no.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>MacDonald, Report or Distort?, p. 17.

<sup>23</sup>Modern Media Institute Ethics Center Seminar, The Adversary Press, (St. Petersburg, Fla.: Modern Media Institute, 1983), p. 10. Citing a speech by Michael O'Neill.

MacDonald wrote that correspondents risked their lives in Vietnam for a variety of reasons, including the lure that armed conflicts have traditionally held for free-spirited correspondents in previous wars. Others felt a purely practical need to be there to enhance their careers. One was Neil Hickey of TV Guide, whose reports profiled the role of television news reporters at the war:

Let's be truthful. . . . We're all war profiteers. We know that if we can prove ourselves here, we can short-cut our careers by five to ten years. Here in Vietnam you can get your face on the network news three or four times a week. That's more than you can do in the United States. It's risky, but it's money in the bank. A lot of us realized that reputations were being made out here, and that we'd better get in on it. For TV newsmen of a certain age group, you've got to have Vietnam on your record if you want to succeed. It's like being knighted into full correspondent status.

But for many who went, the lure was fatal. In Vietnam 45 correspondents died, more than in any other U.S. war. Many more were wounded and some 18 others remain missing in action.<sup>24</sup>

Glory and recognition did come to many who reported there. Reporters such as Morley Safer and Peter Arnett

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<sup>24</sup>MacDonald, Report or Distort?, p. 114. And, Knightley, The First Casualty, p. 405.

became journalistic leaders there. Now a correspondent for CBS's "60 Minutes," Safer's most memorable report came from a small Vietnam hamlet when U.S. Marines burned the village's thatched huts using "Zippo" cigarette lighters. His bitter commentary in the report made Americans wonder if such military actions were necessary. The Marines later contested Safer's report was unfair and distorted.<sup>25</sup>

Arnett is widely acclaimed as the antithesis of the Vietnam correspondent. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1966 for his work for The Associated Press. He spent some eight years covering the war, in which he "saw more combat than most infantrymen." Arnett had a knack for being in the right place at the right time. On a drive on the outskirts of Saigon, he happened upon a movie crew busily faking battle scenes "with mock charges and attacks and 'friendly' forces obligingly substituting for the enemy." The crew was filming for the United States Information Agency. The furor that followed Arnett's story on the incident caused USIA

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<sup>25</sup>MacDonald, Report or Distort?, p. 276. And, "On the Air: The War That Came in From the Tube," by Tom Shales, The Washington Post, April 21, 1985, p. F1. The Marines contend that Safer failed to mention that their helicopters flew over the village the day before and had announced with loudspeakers in Vietnamese that the village was to be destroyed. They had taken sniper fire from the hamlet.



officials to fire the crew and shelve the footage. Arnett had quoted an officer on what the film's purpose was: "'We want to show the world how things really are here.'" Arnett also made a point never to become involved himself in the stories he covered and "observe(d) with as much professional detachment as possible, to report a scene with clarity and accuracy." It was Arnett who watched as a Buddhist monk in Saigon squirted himself with gasoline and then ignited himself.<sup>26</sup>

'I could have prevented that immolation by rushing him and kicking the gasoline (container) away. As a human being I wanted to, as a reporter I couldn't.' So Arnett photographed the monk ablaze, beat off the Vietnamese secret police trying to grab his camera, raced back to the Associated Press office, and sent his photograph and story (a)round the world.<sup>27</sup>

Conflicting views of how the war should be reported between Time magazine's editors and reporters became a controversy not altogether unlike Hearst's remonstrance of Davis and Remington over their failure to provide a non-existent Spanish-American War. The incident occurred when Time's editors doubted the veracity of their own Saigon

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid, p. 196.

<sup>27</sup>Knightley, The First Casualty, p.406. Citing Arnett's May 15, 1971 press conference.

reporters' work in 1963. In its September 20th edition Time said it believed reporters in Saigon (including its own bureau staffers), were "compounding the very confusion that they should be untangling for their readers at home . . . cover(ing) a complex situation from only one angle, as if their own conclusions offered all the necessary illumination." The incident so angered Charles Mohr and Mert Perry of Time's Saigon bureau they requested space for a rebuttal, but the request was denied. They resigned in protest.<sup>28</sup>

But not all was so wrought with dissension. There were reporters in Vietnam who were, in effect, throwbacks to an earlier age. Some worked for smaller and less influential publications, but they were widely known in their readership markets. One such reporter was Charlie Black, who covered the war in Ernie Pyle-like fashion. Black, a correspondent for the Columbus (Georgia) Enquirer, left no doubt of his advocacy for the war: "I'm not covering this war in an objective manner. . . . I want it to be known whose side I'm on." His dispatches were carried in the 38,000-circulation paper whose readers were primarily residents at Ft. Benning

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<sup>28</sup>David Halberstam, The Making of a Quagmire, (New York: Random House, 1964), pp. 269-74. MacDonald, Report or Distort?, pp. 25-26. And, Knightley, The First Casualty, pp. 379-80.

-- home of the Army's School of Infantry. Black rarely ventured to Saigon. He preferred instead to remain in the bush with his cavalry unit. He said his goal -- like Pyle's -- was to get the privates' stories:

When you operate with a small unit. . . it's not fair to be a burden. You have to carry your own chow, your own gear, your own weapon. If you don't, you're a strap hanger, a VIP. And when you're a VIP you're never really one of the bunch, you never get that PFC's story.

Once, in action near Plei Me, two North Vietnamese soldiers jumped out of "spider holes" and began firing at Black. He fired back with an Army-furnished M-16. "It was a case of git or git got," he later told a fellow journalist.<sup>29</sup>

Many correspondents learned to cope by emotional detachment from events. One said: "There is simply no point in arguing whether the war is right or wrong. You're always left with the fact that it is there and it's your job to cover it." It proved impossible for some, however. Alec Shimkin of Newsweek became "temporarily crazed with fury and grief" after he witnessed the burning deaths of two infants. Approached by colleagues to find out what had occurred he shouted, "Goddamn you! Leave me alone. Get the hell out."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>MacDonald, Report or Distort?, pp. 63-64.

<sup>30</sup>Knightley, The First Casualty, pp. 406-07. Citing the London Daily Telegraph Magazine, May 31, 1968. Soon after, Shimkin was reported missing and presumed dead.

Perhaps the most ferocious controversy concerning a correspondent's behavior in Vietnam involved The New York Times' Harrison Salisbury. Accusations of treason flew over his revolutionary approach to war reporting that deeply shocked official Washington. The Times had sponsored a visit by Salisbury, its assistant managing editor, to North Vietnam in 1966. The visit came as U.S. bombing of the North Vietnamese had been increased. Administration officials continually insisted the bombing involved "surgical" strikes aimed only at military targets. The accounts written by Salisbury contradicted the government line, with his reports citing villages that had been targets of bombing runs in which many civilians had died. His "accounts confronted the administration with what a Pentagon spokesman, Phil Goulding, called a 'credibility disaster,'" Karnow wrote. Goulding later conceded that Salisbury's reports "presented a 'reasonably accurate picture' of (the) bombing damage," although he noted Salisbury had initially failed to attribute his information to Communist sources. The reports also had given the wrong impression that the bombing efforts had been flagrantly indiscriminate. Whatever their veracity, Salisbury's reports enraged President Lyndon Johnson and other officials, and they widely criticized

Salisbury as being sympathetic to and a "dupe" of the Communists. The Times' main competitor, the Washington Post, aided the administration anti-Salisbury effort by reporting leaked material that refuted Salisbury's dispatches "line-by-line." The Post "triumphantly reported that Salisbury's accounts matched a Communist 'propaganda pamphlet'" they had discovered. The orchestrated campaign against Salisbury was so effective that an advisory board of publishers for the prestigious Pulitzer Prize overruled the voting committee after it had voted to award Salisbury the honor of a prize.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the controversy over Salisbury's coverage of the North Vietnamese on their home turf, Ron Dorfman, of the media journal Quill, contends that Salisbury's break with traditional war reporting heralded an important change. Dorfman wrote:

To most of the press at the time, treating the enemy as a news source like any other somehow smacked of heresy, if not disloyalty or treason. But in the intervening years, journalists have generally come to appreciate the fundamental unreality of the notion that our side has truth and their side has only propaganda.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Karnow, Vietnam, pp. 489-90.

<sup>32</sup>Ron Dorfman, "Bring the War Back Home," The Quill (January 1984): 16.

### **The Role of Television**

Was Vietnam a war decided in American living rooms with American public support whittled away by each nightly filmed broadcast of distant military action? Perhaps no other topic from the U.S. Vietnam experience has received such attention or remained as divisive an issue. The controversy will no doubt continue. But the decision of the Reagan Administration to bar reporters from going to Grenada at the outset of the October 1982 invasion brought the controversy over television and Vietnam to the forefront again. The administration's decision left many in the national journalism community convinced that their worst fears had been realized. Their view was that, with the proven success of the British in controlling their media in the recent Falklands War (which will be discussed in the next chapter), the widely espoused view that television coverage had "lost the war" in Vietnam had been proved true in the Grenada war.

Television coverage of Vietnam allowed the relatively new medium to become the nation's "foremost frame of reference, our new mirror," critic Michael Arlen has said. "If there ever was a possibility that this country would not develop into a television republic, that

possibility was canceled out by Vietnam," Arlen explained, with news coverage having forever changed the concept of the "home front."<sup>33</sup>

Ted Koppel, present host of ABC's widely acclaimed television news program "Nightline" and a former Vietnam correspondent, agreed that television's influence in Vietnam has not necessarily been overstated. He believes that its role is often considered out of proper context, however:

It was within the power of the Johnson administration to go to Congress, ask for a declaration of war, presumably get one, and then impose censorship. Then you wouldn't have had the television coverage everybody writes about. But they wouldn't pay the price. They weren't sure they could get that declaration of war. Johnson was worried about endangering his Great Society programs. They tried to play both ends against the middle, and of course they failed miserably.<sup>34</sup>

Koppel has disagreed with many who believe that the student antiwar movement was strengthened by television coverage. "People don't need television to tell them a boy has gone to Southeast Asia and not come back," he said. Television's effect was to "telescope what would have happened over a long(er) period of time and make it happen more quickly."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>"On the Air," Shales, p. F4. And, Arlen, Living Room War.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

A study conducted by senior officers attending the U.S. Army War College quoted Washington Post military correspondent George Wilson. His view is that the first-good, then-bad military-media relationship itself may have been to blame for coverage military officials perceived to be negative toward their fighting efforts. Although he, too, expressed concern with the television's persistent emphasis on the dramatic story, Wilson said:

I. . . would contradict those who say that TV ruined it. . . . Vietnam started out to be a very hardsell effort by the Pentagon. They thought that, if they flew enough reporters out. . . in the early days, we would write all these stories about, 'We gotta get in there.' So they were using the press to sell their story of involvement. In those early days, they would fly a reporter all the way from Washington to Vietnam at government expense, and take him around and show him glamorous Green Beret things, and show him a few charts and what could be done if we only put more men in there. And it worked. . . . When the habit was formed of showing off how great we were doing in Vietnam then it went sour (sic). We were still there, the facts got bad, and the press suddenly was the enemy.

The "bad footage" was in reaction to the media having received for too long a lopsided "Madison Avenue sell" version of what was going on, Wilson said.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Col. James M. Winters, Lt Col. Douglas H. Rogers and Lt. Col. Richard Erickson, "The Military and the Media: A Need For Control," (Study Project, U.S. Army War College, June 9, 1983) pp. 72-73.



Specific U.S. Defense Department criticisms of television news coverage in Vietnam were described by Neil Hickey, a TV Guide correspondent who covered the role of television news in the war. Most prominent among the criticisms were that:

- \* Television is too engrossed with battle scenes, air strikes, and civil mayhem at the expense of the duller or more significant stories of Vietnamese politics, inflation, pacification, education and construction of schools. . . .

- \* . . . the camera's eye is too narrow to convey the full truth of a military action involving large units. As a result, the cameraman becomes an editor as he chooses to record the most violent and dramatic aspects of (the) military action.

- \* Viewers often receive a partial, out-of-context story, because TV crews too often move with smaller units, like the squad or platoon (sic), although what happens at that level has only minimal significance to the larger picture back at division headquarters.

- \* Many of the network correspondents are too young and inexperienced to convey fully the meaning of this complex war.

- \* . . . the networks. . . employed too many foreign nationals in their Vietnam bureaus. . . (many of whom were) in such strong disagreement with U.S. policies, their opinions infect(ed) the quality of their reporting.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Jack E. Hill, "A Survey of Network Television's Coverage of the War in Vietnam," (Master's Thesis, University of Missouri-Columbia, January 1967), p. 106. Citing Hickey, "Vietnam: Is Television Giving Us the Picture?," TV Guide, XIV (October 22, 1966), 36.

Others cite evidence that contradicts the view that television's effects had any impact on turning public opinion against the war. Robert Harris, in his book on the role of news media and government in the British-Argentinian Falkland Islands war, recounted a Newsweek 1967 survey of television viewers that revealed 64 percent of respondents "felt more like 'backing up the boys in Vietnam' as a result of what they'd seen on TV" while 26 percent said it had caused them to turn against the war. Another poll conducted five years later by psychiatrist Fredric Wertham found that television "had the effect of conditioning viewers to accept the war" rather than turning attitudes against it.<sup>38</sup>

Journalist Robert MacNeil, co-anchor of "The MacNeil-Lehrer Report," which now airs on public television stations, covered Vietnam first as a radio correspondent for NBC and later for the BBC. In his autobiography, he supported the view that the effects of television news coverage were limited, even with the medium's tendency to be dominated by events filled with action rather than the thoughtful interpretation that such occurrences often warranted.

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<sup>38</sup>Young, "From Saigon to Salvador," p. 11. Citing Harris's book, Gotcha! The Media, the Government, and the Falklands Crisis.

I slowly became aware of (television's) frequent triviality, its distorting brevity, its obsession with action and movement, its infantile attention span, and its profound lack of thoughtful analysis . . . . To my ears the coverage had the tone of breezy meaninglessness. . . .

Despite such strong criticism, he is convinced that the blame television has been given for making the war unpopular is unfounded. If anything, the sins of televisions' concentration only on action footage "made the other war, the growing doubts at home, relatively invisible."

The business-as-usual tone of voice was putting the war into too ordinary a context. . . . inevitably, television sanitized the horror, domesticated and tamed it as suitable for family consumption at supertime; not through any conspiracy to deceive but simply because television passes everything through a bland taste filter.

MacNeil, however, did agree that some specific events had profound effects, primarily because they questioned the official version of how the war was going. The Marines burning hutches, a little girl aflame in napalm, and a prisoner executed by pistol at point-blank range were

. . . images (that) seared themselves into the national consciousness. . . . They were shocking because they contradicted the routine story of brave Americans in action and positive official statements about the (war's) progress.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Robert MacNeil, The Right Place at the Right Time, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), pp. 238-39, 245.

Sanford Socolow, a former executive producer of "The CBS Evening News," agrees with MacNeil's latter analysis. He has said that the "dull, turgid, 'responsible' stories" CBS broadcast became victim to the medium's more dramatic ones.

. . . stories we did, true or false, about land reform, or about the wonderful, bucolic programs to win the hearts and minds of the people. . . bored the tears out of people, cumulatively speaking, for hours. You get one battle piece which lasts two minutes, and it erases the memory of everything you've done for two weeks. . . .

He concluded that because of the television medium's visual qualities, it is "almost beyond anybody's power to balance those things."<sup>40</sup>

### **The Tet Offensive Controversy**

Particularly vehement criticism has come from the role the media played in reporting the 1968 Tet offensive. Many in both government and the media have charged the reports were totally out of balance with the true events. General Westmoreland was one who alleged that distorted news

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<sup>40</sup>Stephan Leshner, Media Unbound: The Impact of Television Journalism on the Public, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982), pp. 8-9.

reports of Tet had "transformed a devastating Communist military defeat. . . into a 'psychological victory' for the enemy." Peter Braestrup, a former Washington Post Vietnam correspondent, has leveled the same charge. He specifically attributed the "crisis journalism" of the period as the primary cause for the misinterpretation of Tet's events. Rarely have journalists "veered so widely from reality," he wrote in a voluminous report on Tet.<sup>41</sup>

Although the effect of the publicity on Tet has remained in great dispute, public opinion did change considerably after the offensive occurred. By 1967 a plurality had come to believe that involvement in the war had been a mistake. Six weeks after the attacks of Tet, public approval of the war dropped from 48 percent to 36 percent. Endorsement of President Johnson's handling of Vietnam fell from 40 percent to 26 percent.<sup>42</sup>

Karnow has disputed these surveys, however, with the contention that "whatever the quality of the reporting. . . , the momentous Tet episode scarcely altered American

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<sup>41</sup>Peter Braestrup, Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet, (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1977).

<sup>42</sup>Karnow, Vietnam, p. 545.

attitudes toward the war." He believes that the loss of favor for the war included factors that went far beyond the Tet episode such as "mounting casualties, rising taxes, and especially, the feeling that there was no end in view." The trust of the nation in Johnson had "evaporated," Karnow explained. The president's "credibility -- the key to (his) capacity to govern -- was gone." Although Johnson did what he could to turn the situation around, including ordering Westmoreland to "hold daily briefings for U.S. correspondents. . . in order to 'reassure the public. . . that you have the situation under control,'" his efforts failed.<sup>43</sup>

Then, even the nation's most respected journalist -- CBS News anchorman Walter Cronkite -- departed from his once-balanced reporting. His shift came after a personal visit to Vietnam upon the completion of the Tet offensive. He lambasted U.S. war policy, and pronounced this verdict:

It seems now more certain than ever that the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate. . . the only rational way out then will be to people who lived up to their pledge to defend democracy, and did the best they could.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid, pp. 546-48.

<sup>44</sup>I.M. Destler, Leslie H. Gelb, and Anthony Lake, Our Own Worst Enemy; The Unmaking of American Foreign Policy, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), p. 141.

The broadcast left a "shocked and depressed" Johnson ready to decide not to run for re-election.<sup>45</sup>

Other journalists, too, drew equally damning conclusions. The Wall Street Journal bluntly stated that "people should be getting ready to accept, if they haven't already, the prospect that the whole Vietnam effort may be doomed." Karnow concluded, however, that editorial views did not shape a change of attitude on Vietnam. They simply reflected an American public opinion shift that had either begun in earnest or had already taken place.<sup>46</sup>

#### **Some Vietnam Lessons**

While the dispute over the role the Tet Offensive did or did not play in causing disfavor for the war or not rages on, one result of the controversy is certain. A "deep-seated distrust" within the ranks of the armed forces now hampers the present military-media relationship despite some efforts by both sides to improve the

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid. The authors contend that the press had "pulled its punches" as U.S. involvement in Vietnam grew over time. "Then step by step, it moved -- like Congress -- toward a declaration of independence."

<sup>46</sup>Karnow, Vietnam, pp. 547-48.

situation. "That distrust is palpable at conferences where reporters and editors sit down with military officers to air their differences," wrote Frank Morring, Jr., defense correspondent for Scripps-Howard News Service, with ". . . many officers (who) believe (Vietnam) was 'lost on the home front' and (still) blame reporters for the turn of public opinion. . . ."47

But Col. Harry Summers, who has authored a book on U.S. Vietnam War strategy, has offered another outlook that goes against the grain of the prevailing military view:

There is a tendency in the military to blame our problems with (lack of) public support on the media. This is too easy an answer. . . . The majority of the on-the-scene (Vietnam) reporting was factual -- that is, the reporters honestly reported what they had seen, firsthand. Much of what they saw was horrible, for that is the nature of war. It was this horror, not the reporting, that so influenced the American people.<sup>48</sup>

It is ironic, wrote columnist Tom Wicker of The New York Times, that Johnson perhaps failed in Vietnam because

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<sup>47</sup>Frank Morring Jr., "Pentagon, News Media Fighting A Bitter War of Words," RTNDA Communicator, March 1985, p. 27.

<sup>48</sup>"Should the Press Have Been With the Military on Grenada: Yes; We Need Media to Battle for the Truth," by Harry Summers, Los Angeles Times, November 13, 1983, sec. IV, p. 1.



he did not impose censorship due to the heavy political consequences. The military's own willingness to provide almost unlimited transportation and communications support to the media may have contributed to the war effort's undoing.

. . . Reporters, skeptical of the relentless optimism of the Follies, thus found it possible to get out in the field. . . . (they) began to engage in the most objective journalism of all -- seeing. . . (and) judging for themselves, backing up their judgments with their observations. . . .<sup>49</sup>

What cannot be debated is that Vietnam has left lasting effects on U.S. foreign policy. The "post-Vietnam syndrome," as it has come to be known, has left leaders cautious and more uncertain about the United States' ability to shape world affairs. Present Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger has argued that the United States should avoid future "Vietnams," first by fighting only wars that have popular public support and, secondly, by entering only those conflicts where there is a chance of winning.<sup>50</sup>

Army Chief of Staff Gen. John A. Wickham Jr., naturally, agreed. He said:

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<sup>49</sup>Tom Wicker, On Press, (New York: The Viking Press, 1975), p. 7.

<sup>50</sup>"Vietnam's Legacy: A Decade After War, U.S. Leaders Still Feel Effects of the Defeat," by David Ignatius, The Wall Street Journal, January 14, 1985, p. 1.

The moral lesson of Vietnam. . . is that, in any future war, the soldiers must fight with the conviction that the war is important to the nation. It is the responsibility of the leadership to be sure that the soldiers understand the nature of the war. . . . And I think that the moral responsibility of the nation is that, once we commit force, we must be prepared to back it up. . . .<sup>51</sup>

When events in October of 1983 brought the tiny island nation of Grenada to the world's center stage, the U.S. leadership acted upon its first true opportunity to fight such a battle. It would prove an easy military victory, but would create a journalistic furor over the rightful wartime role the news media should play in the post-Vietnam age.

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<sup>51</sup>"War's Lessons," Wilson, p. A9.

## Chapter Five

### The Grenada Furor

The wailing of the press because it was denied advance briefing and immediate access to the Grenada operation is like that of the child denied a stick of candy, unaware that it was a stick of dynamite.

Surprise, celerity and concentration of forces are the quintessence of military success. A commander has a hole in his head and (a) hole in his plan if he sacrifices secrecy. Might as well sacrifice lives. Engaging the press while engaging the enemy is taking on one adversary too many.

-- Maj. Gen. John E. Murray, U.S. Army (Ret.)<sup>1</sup>

### Crux of the Controversy

This chapter will examine the controversy that surrounded the unprecedented move of the Reagan Administration to bar reporters from accompanying American troops on their October 1983 invasion of the island of Grenada. The view of the Administration will first be offered. Secondly, the reaction of those in the news media will be described. The public reaction to the episode will be examined as well. Activities of various panels that were instituted to study

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<sup>1</sup>"Journalists in the Press of Battle," by Maj. Gen. (Ret.) John E. Murray, The Wall Street Journal, 4 November 1983, p. 29.

the situation will be detailed. Finally, a review is given in regard to what has happened to the military-media relationship in Grenada's aftermath.

### **Invasion of an Island Nation**

The invasion of Grenada by the United States took place October 25, 1983. It came after conflicts within the island nation's leadership had led to the ouster and murder of its Marxist leader, Maurice Bishop. General Hudson Austin had taken power from Bishop and imposed a 24-hour "shoot-to-kill" curfew. News of the takeover alarmed Grenada's neighboring island nations, whose leaders had been concerned about Bishop's growing attachment to Cuba. Their alarm increased with the radical Austin's bloody takeover. Those leaders immediately gathered to discuss the developments of the coup.<sup>2</sup>

In Washington, too, President Reagan and his advisors had grown concerned after Bishop and five aides had been murdered by army troops October 19 upon being freed from

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<sup>2</sup>"A Crisis in the Caribbean," Newsweek, (31 October 1983); 20-21.

house arrest by supporters. Administration officials met October 20 to discuss what threat the takeover might be for American medical students on the island. Also of concern was the possibility that Austin might move further to allow the island's Cuban-built 9,000-foot runway to become a staging base for Soviet aircraft. On October 21, the President and Secretary of State George Shultz secretly deliberated. The same day, Grenada's Caribbean neighbors cabled Reagan with an informal appeal for aid. Meanwhile, the administration had drafted invasion plans that were "telescoped," Defense Secretary Weinberger said, for U.S. troops to move in quickly to rescue the American students, and then, just as quickly, to move out. But by October 24, the plan had changed to include a "clear-and-hold" operation. That evening the President met with congressional leaders to brief them on the impending invasion. The next morning at 9 a.m., Reagan told reporters at a White House news conference that four hours earlier, U.S. troops had landed in Grenada. He said he had authorized the move to:

. . . protect our own citizens, to facilitate the evacuation of those who want to leave, and to help in the restoration of democratic institutions in Grenada.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid. And, Peter Braestrup, Battle Lines, (New York: Priority Press, 1985), p. 83.

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### International Editorial Reaction

Many Latin American states were outraged at the invasion, claiming it had violated the charter of the Organization of American States. They said the charter prohibited intervention of one American state in the affairs of another. Administration officials, however, defended the action arguing that it was necessary to protect the lives of the 1,000 U.S. citizens on the island, and "given the chaotic conditions" there, it was "not intervention" under the definition of the O.A.S. charter.<sup>4</sup>

Even allies of the United States condemned the invasion. Britain's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said she had argued against the move in a phone call to Reagan a few days before the invasion took place. "We communicated our very serious doubts. . . and asked (the United States) to weigh carefully several points before taking any irrevocable action," newspaper accounts said she told the President. News reports described her as angry that Reagan had ignored her pleas.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"Attack Called Breach Of OAS Rules,"  
St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 26 October 1983, p. 19A.

<sup>5</sup>"U.S. Allies Join Foes in Censuring Invasion,"  
St. Louis Post Dispatch, 26 October 1985, p. 12A.

Despite the international clamor it was bound to create, the invasion proceeded with only 16 U.S. soldiers killed. But the successful military action would spark another fight -- one that still has journalism and military concerned -- a battle of words between government and press.

#### **The Government Explanation**

Secretary Weinberger acted as spokesman to explain the administration's rationale for the manner in which the news media were handled in the Grenada invasion. Weinberger wrote that the short notice military had received before the invasion had overshadowed any thought of news coverage in planning sessions. Secrecy was also needed because of concern for the safety of the medical students on Grenada, he said.

With this in mind, the decision was made by the commanders to whom we entrusted this dangerous mission to withhold from the press advance notification of the Grenada operation and to keep reporters and other noncombatants off. . . until the American citizens were safe. . . .<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"Covering the Battle with Pentagon Handouts," by Sandy Grady, The Denver Post, 28 October 1983, p. 2B. And, "Should the Press Have Been With the Military on Grenada? No: Secrecy Was Needed for Citizens' Safety," by Caspar Weinberger, Los Angeles Times, 13 November 1984, sec. IV, p. 1.



Weinberger argued the decision was also justified since the U.S. forces had encountered heavy hostile fire. In response to a question from reporters, he asserted "that since military commanders didn't want reporters along, (he) 'wouldn't ever dream' of overriding their decision." He later noted he could have overruled it, but did not because of concern for reporters' safety.<sup>7</sup> Weinberger wrote:

As soon as the evacuation was in its final stages, less than 48 hours after the operation began, members of the press were flown into Grenada, although sporadic fighting continued, they were given complete freedom and the run of the island, and our total cooperation in arranging interviews (sic). We also arranged to fly press representatives back to Barbados every day so they could file their stories, because there were no transmission facilities on the island.<sup>8</sup>

Weinberger concluded that this decision was typical of the "difficult choices" that sometimes must be made when national security is involved. "In this case, we came down

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<sup>7</sup>"An Off the Record War," Newsweek, (7 November 1983): 83. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Vessey Jr., now retired, reportedly told the President before the invasion: "If I do this, I'm not taking the press with me," according to Richard Beal, a National Security Council staff member. "We had too many problems with the press in Vietnam," Vessey said. ("Press--Military Relations," by Jack Foisie, Neiman Reports, [Spring 1984]: 16).

<sup>8</sup>"Covering the Battle," Grady, p. 2B. And "Should the Press," Weinberger, p. 1.

on the side of trying to provide for the security of military and civilian personnel," he said.<sup>9</sup>

Chief Defense Department spokesman at the time of the Grenada invasion was Michael I. Burch. A former military officer, Burch believed that Grenada was perhaps a unique incident and that reporters were over-concerned about what occurred there. He said that if he were to go through the experience again, the one improvement he would hope to make would be to get news media "pools in a little earlier, and in greater numbers." Burch used the following analogy: "Do firemen have a right to set up fire lines to keep reporters from rushing into burning buildings?" That, he stated, was the question of "reporter safety" that the administration considered in its Grenada decision-making.<sup>10</sup>

### **The Media Complaints**

The nation's news media have responded to the administration's explanation with arguments that counter every

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Lyle Denniston, "Planning for Future Grenadas," The Quill 72, (January 1984): 13.

reason the government gave for its conduct in barring them from the invasion. They have also leveled countercharges based primarily on past performances of the news media in wartime. News organizations throughout U.S. history, the press said, have shown that journalists can be trusted in wartime situations to keep governmental secrets. They have also pointed out that government interest for press safety had never before been an issue of concern.

Wall Street Journal Columnist Vermont Royster wrote that if Secretary Weinberger did leave the decision in military hands on whether or not the media should accompany the military in Grenada, nobody should be surprised by the outcome. It is only natural for a general primarily concerned with the matter at hand -- to win the battle he is entering -- to leave out any element that would hinder that goal, Royster wrote.

The wisdom of leaving military operations to military men has been shown over and over. . . (but) there are some things, of course, that shouldn't be left to military men.<sup>11</sup>

Creed C. Black, editor of the Lexington Herald-Leader

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<sup>11</sup>"Thinking Things Over: Military Men and Matters," by Vermont Royster, The Wall Street Journal, 23 November 1983, p. 26).

and president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, said that "reporters' safety" was not a valid issue.

. . . American newsmen know that war is dangerous. The risk goes with the territory, and the representatives of a free press in an open society have proved their willingness to assume it; 140 American correspondents lost their lives in World War II, and another 53 died in Vietnam.<sup>12</sup>

On the matter of keeping the invasion a secret, many in the news media argued that evidence abounded that suggests journalists were trustworthy. As noted in chapter three, military officials such as Gen. Dwight Eisenhower often trusted reporters as "quasi-staff officers." Others cited as evidence The New York Times' withholding information on President John F. Kennedy's pending Cuban invasion plans in the Bay of Pigs fiasco. The Times also knew of the Cuban missile crisis, but again held the story at Kennedy's request.<sup>13</sup> More recently, in President Jimmy Carter's 1981 Iranian hostage crisis situation, through sheer deduction,

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<sup>12</sup>Creed C. Black, "Opening Comments before the Sidle Panel on Military-Media Relations," American Society of Newspaper Editors Press Release, February, 6, 1984.

<sup>13</sup>Schudson, Discovering the News, p. 171-172. And, John Chancellor, "The Media and the Invasion of Grenada: Facts and Fallacies," Television Quarterly 20 (April 1984): 30. Kennedy told the Times later: "If you had printed (the Bay of Pigs story) you would have saved us from a colossal mistake."

reporters had come to realize that several unaccounted for American hostages were being hidden in the Canadian Embassy in Teheran. When journalists were asked by officials to withhold that information from publication or broadcast to help ensure the safety of those hostages, the media cooperated. As a result, the story did not leak and the hostages were released unharmed.<sup>14</sup>

If secrecy was such an overriding concern, officials still could have taken reporters along, Howard Simons, the Washington Post's managing editor, said:

If somebody had come to me and said, 'You can't report this until the operation is secure,' I would have said, 'Fine,' (But) I want to be there. I want to see it with my eyes, not the Pentagon's.<sup>15</sup>

### **Was the Falklands War Influential?**

It is not the aim of this thesis to describe other governments' military-media relationships or censorship policies. But the events of the British-Argentinian

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<sup>14</sup>Chancellor, "The Media," p. 29.

<sup>15</sup>"An Off the Record War," Newsweek, p. 83.

Falklands War must be reviewed because of statements made by U.S. journalists that England's policies may have stimulated U.S. Grenada policy. These journalists have charged that what really occurred at Grenada had nothing to do with either safety or trust. Their contention is that Reagan Administration officials were greatly impressed by the British government's willingness to impose censorship on the news media in the Falklands. Accordingly, when the invasion of Grenada was planned, the U.S. government acted in a similar fashion.

CBS News Correspondent Bill Lynch said that a Pentagon official had confirmed that, indeed, the U.S. deliberations and decision-making processes on Grenada had indeed been influenced by the curbs on the press the British had instituted. "We learned a lot from the British (at) the Falklands," that source told Lynch.<sup>16</sup>

What occurred in the Falklands War in terms of media management was based on information control. All the media background briefings on the crisis were ended when the British task force set sail on April 2, 1982, for the

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<sup>16</sup>Grady, "Covering the Battle," p. 2B. The author described the Pentagon attitude as: "You can cover the war, boys, now that it's over."

Falklands. Even before that, the Royal Navy Task Force -- the unit that had the responsibility to plan and execute the British strategy -- had, at first, decided not to take any members of the press along. Later, its leaders relented and decided to take only six journalists. Then, apparently at the insistence of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a pool of correspondents and photographers was assembled that included some 26 people in all. But the willingness to take the reporters along was tempered by what occurred when the flotilla arrived at the battle scene one month later. It was then, according to an article written by John Chancellor of NBC News, that the military proceeded to do everything it could to hinder correspondents' efforts to file their dispatches and to get their videotaped reports back to Britain. Their efforts worked well, Chancellor wrote:

. . . (the British) did take Vietnam into account, and every effort was made to impede and delay pictures going back to Britain. Television pictures took two weeks to reach London, an amazing delay these days.<sup>17</sup>

Journalist-Historian Peter Braestrup's background paper for the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force Report on the Military and Media pointed out, however, that the British

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<sup>17</sup>Chancellor, "The Media," p. 31.

actions should be considered in their historical context. The history of government-press relations is quite different in Britain than in the United States. Traditionally, there have been fewer freedoms for the British press in wartime situations. The British Defense ministry's Falklands information policy, for instance, was based on the assumption that "the public has both an interest in and a right to know about defense," said Sir Frank Cooper, the permanent undersecretary. "But we do not regard these rights as unlimited," he added.<sup>18</sup>

After the war, a parliamentary inquiry on the Falklands censorship was held in London. Journalist Robert McGowan of The Daily Express and others testified then that the official briefings they had received at the Falklands had ranged from the "erratic to the purposely misleading." McGowan cited one case in which reporters had been told casualties had been "minimal" when the Argentines had conducted a bombing attack. Later, he learned that 50 British troops had been killed. There were other cases of

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<sup>18</sup>Braestrup, Battle Lines, p. 78. Citing Arthur A. Humphries, "Two Routes to the Wrong Destination: Public Affairs in The South Atlantic War," Naval War College Review, June 1983, p. 60. Humphries is a U.S. navy lieutenant commander.



government news management. They included the misinformation that Argentines who were stationed at the Falklands were "starving and suffering from dysentery, although it was later learned that they were as well-provisioned as (the) British. . . ." Braestrup also cited evidence gathered by an investigative reporting team from The Sunday Times of London. The team report concluded:

There were. . . occasions when the Ministry of Defense, while not lying directly, certainly misled journalists with the calculated intention of deceiving the enemy. The false impression that the submarine Superb was on patrol in the South Atlantic, when in fact she was limping back to Britain, was never denied; and prior to the landings at San Carlos, everyone was actively encouraged to believe that there would be no such operation -- only a series of hit-and-run raids.<sup>19</sup>

NBC's Chancellor quoted a British Defense Ministry official as having explained his government's Falklands policy as one that had been based on the U.S. experience in Vietnam. ". . . (Britain) was not going to have (its) home front morale sapped by pictures of dead British soldiers on the telly every evening," the official said. If that was the case, the irony is evident in the various charges that U.S.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid, p. 80. First, citing The New York Times story, "Misled on Falklands, British Press Says," 29 July 1983, p. A3. And, second, citing The Sunday Times of London Insight Team, "The Other Casualty," p. 225.

journalists have made. Was American Grenada policy based on British Falklands press curbs that were, in turn, based on America's Vietnam policies?<sup>20</sup>

Whatever the truth of the matter, the U.S. news media found plenty more fodder for criticism aimed at the administration when Secretary of State George Shultz, in reference to media coverage of Grenada, made these remarks:

. . . (in past U.S. wars) reporters were involved all along. And on the whole they were on our side. These days, in the advocacy journalism that's been developed, it seems as though the reporters are always against us and so they're always seeking to screw things up. And when you're trying to conduct a military operation, you don't need that.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Samples of Grenada Editorial Reaction**

The critics of the Reagan Administration's handling of the press at Grenada had no more vociferous a spokesman than conservative Columnist William Safire. His columns included blistering attacks on the Reagan Administration and he flatly accused Defense Secretary Weinberger of "lying. . .

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<sup>20</sup>Chancellor, "The Media," p. 31.

<sup>21</sup>Michael Massing, "Grenada, We Will Never Know," Index on Censorship, (April 84): 15. Shultz, in a later interview, backed off of this statement.

about why he barred the press from the battlefield. . . ."

Safire wrote that it was President Reagan himself who "in effect (had) kidnapped and whisked away the American reporters on the scene."<sup>22</sup>

Reporter Don Bohning of Knight-Ridder News Service, along with six other journalists, had landed on Grenada in a privately rented boat some six hours after the U.S. Marines had arrived. The next day, with extensive stories ready for transmission, which included accounts of ground and air battles the reporters had witnessed, the group sent one of its members in search of the Marines. They had hoped the military would aid them in filing their stories.

A colonel obliged -- or so we thought. He put us on a helicopter that flew us to the U.S.S. Guam helicopter carrier. We figured we would be able to file from the ship. Wrong again. Instead, we found ourselves more or less captives of the U.S. Navy. For 18 hours, we cooled our heels on the Guam, unable to file.

The military's stated reason: communications facilities were too busy with military message traffic to handle the reporters' stories.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>"What Freedom of the Press," by James Brady, Advertising Age, 14 November 1983, p. 6.

<sup>23</sup>"Lots of Story But No Way to File It," by Don Bohning, Washington Post, 28 October 1983, p. A16.

Columnist Safire concluded that the Administration's "nastiest reason" for barring reporters from Grenada and

. . . bruited about within the Reagan bunker, is that even a small press pool would have blabbed and cost American lives. Not only is this below the belt but beside the point: we know that Cubans knew of the invasion plans at least a day in advance (of the attack).<sup>24</sup>

NBC commentator Chancellor also strongly chastised the government in broadcasts aired at the time:

. . . things get dangerous. . . when the government takes unto itself the function of informing the public. It is dangerous because every government likes to put its best face forward, and because no government likes to admit its mistakes. When your friendly government press agent, military or civilian, is your only source of information, you ought to be worried.<sup>25</sup>

Jack Landau, who then headed the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, said that from the Revolutionary War to the present there have been no battles from which the U.S. news media were excluded when their members had found their way to a battle scene. The Grenada decision set a dangerous precedent, Landau argued, because ". . . (the press) always has been given front-line access as soon as it

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<sup>24</sup>"What Freedom," Brady, p. 6.

<sup>25</sup>Chancellor, "The Media," p. 27.

arrived. . . . It is the right to observe that is at issue here."<sup>26</sup>

Ron Dorfman of The Quill wrote that even if one had granted the Pentagon argument that advance notice to the media of the Grenada invasion would have hindered secrecy:

. . . there was still no excuse for denying journalists access in their own boats and planes once the Marines had hit the beach, or forbidding ham radio operators in the U.S. to allow journalists to use their equipment to contact the island. Obviously, the purpose of the secrecy was political containment rather than military security.<sup>27</sup>

The Washington Post's editorial writers were also in a state of outrage:

If the. . . media can be excluded by their own government from direct coverage of events of great importance to the American people, the whole character of the relationship between governors and governed is affected. . . . This is an administration already well known for its tendency to use the national security label to limit the flow of information to the public in various ways. So it is perhaps not so surprising that the convenience of the military -- or its insistence on the primacy of its convenience -- triumphed over good sense, healthy democratic practice and the strong standing tradition of press-government cooperation in coverage of unfolding military events.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Denniston, "Planning for Future Grenadas," p. 13.

<sup>27</sup>Dorfman, "Bring the War Back Home," p. 15.

<sup>28</sup>"Censoring the Invasion," The Washington Post, 28 Oct 1983, p. A22.

The criticism that Advertising Age leveled is that the press actually would helped the administration manage the conflict had the press been along. Its editors recalled a lesson President Lincoln reportedly learned from military actions in the Civil War. "Unless there are reporters at the front, even the President, who is supposed to be the commander-in-chief, can't be sure he knows what is really going on," their editorial stated. By managing the news media as it did, the administration was left to find out about the bombing of a mental hospital on Grenada at about the same time the rest of the world did. The editorial blamed this situation on U.S. military leaders at the scene who did not reveal the information to their superiors earlier on. If the news media had been on the scene, such information would have been known more quickly.<sup>29</sup>

Washington Post Columnist David Broder readily admitted that there was widespread sentiment critical of the media reaction to the Administration's barring of reporters. He wrote that people who espoused such views were "flat-out wrong" in their beliefs. He wrote that it was the obligation of the collective news media to help to clarify the issue.

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<sup>29</sup>"Losing While Winning," Advertising Age, (7 November 1983): p. 16.

They should explain that "control of information gives a government control over its citizens' minds. . . (which is) a monopoly of information (that) is the most dangerous monopoly of all." What was most alarming about the Grenada war, he wrote, was that it could justify a pattern for government policy in future engagements.

If the American people are willing to say in such circumstances it is acceptable to have reporters barred. . . then you can be assured that the precedent will be followed.

While the blackout of news was only 48 hours in Grenada, he explained, it could well be "extended the next time to 60 hours to 6 or 60 days." He ended the column with this plea to his readers:

We in the press are not asking you to like us. Sometimes we do not like what we see each other (in the press) doing. We are asking you to think, on behalf of your own self-interest whether you want to live in a society in which the government controls, directs and excludes us.<sup>30</sup>

In all, the declarations of outrage over Grenada were about as uniform within the press as perhaps any issue could be. Still, some journalistic voices supported the government position. Included in this group was avowed

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<sup>30</sup>"Muzzled Press -- Why Should Public Care?" by David Broder, Los Angeles Times, 7 November 1983, p. 5.

conservative columnist Patrick Buchanan, who later joined the Reagan White House as communications director. Buchanan broadly criticized his journalistic brothers in a column headlined, "Do Peacock Reporters Represent You?" Then a columnist syndicated by the Washington Independent Press Service, Buchanan said that it was perfectly all right with him "if maintaining the element of military surprise mean(t) keeping Sam Donaldson (of ABC News) in the dark, or sending (him) on a wild goose chase. . . ." When compared to the sacrifices of the "16 young Marines and Rangers (who lost their lives at Grenada), of what importance (are) the ruffled feathers of the peacocks in the White House press corps?" He wrote that members of the press who criticized the administration's handling of Grenada "exhibited. . . arrogant and infantile behavior." If they are "'representatives of the American public,' when exactly did we elect them -- and how do we go about canning them?" he asked.<sup>31</sup>

James G. Minter Jr., editor of the Atlanta Journal and Constitution, while somewhat less virulent in his views than Buchanan, also wrote that the media were wrong to

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<sup>31</sup>"Do Peacock Reporters Represent You?" by Patrick Buchanan, The Denver Post, November 2, 1983, p. 2B.



complain. He cited the administration's voiced concerns for invasion secrecy as "compelling" rationale for saving American lives at the battle site.

I honestly wouldn't expect the chairman of the Joint Chiefs to grab a telephone and invite the New York Times, the Washington Post, Knight-Ridder, Gannett, the wire services, the six o'clock news and the Journal and Constitution (to go to the invasion). The First Amendment doesn't stretch that far. . . . Rather than mounting a constitutional soapbox, the press might better spend its time contemplating why it was not informed and invited.<sup>32</sup>

Lester Kinsolving, national editor of Washington Guide magazine, wrote that the military's main concern was not to "accommodate the media in time of combat, so much as it (was) to win, with the minimum casualty rate." He advocated a return to world war policy that would put reporters back in uniform "as military auxiliaries, subject to court martial in the event of any violation of embargo or military censorship." He also called for the exclusion of journalists "whose proprietors or editors are known adherents of the lie-cheat-and-steal-for-a-story school of journalism."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>James G. Minter Jr., as excerpted from an Atlanta Journal and Constitution editorial by the American Society of Newspaper Editors Bulletin, (February 1984): 19.

<sup>33</sup>"Media-Military Hindsight on Grenada," Broadcasting (13 February 1984): 78.

### Other Criticisms

Just as there were journalists who supported the administration, there were government officials who supported the prevailing media view. Former Pentagon spokesman Henry Catto wrote that not allowing the news media to enter Grenada with the invasion force served to hurt rather than help the military's goals there. At Grenada, the U.S. military did "what it does very well indeed -- fighting," he explained. "This fact (was) unfortunately obscured by the military's engaging in what it does not do well at all -- news management." Catto wrote that he believes the failure of the military chain of command to hear or heed the advice of its own public affairs specialists was probably the cause of the decision to leave the press behind: "Unhappily, the average Joint Chiefs of Staff member has all the public relations sense of Attila the Hun." Although holding reporters back from Grenada initially was perhaps justified, it was extending the ban that caused problems.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Henry Catto, "Grenada: The Media Want to Know..." The Washington Post National Weekly Edition, (14 November 1983): 32. Catto added that much of the problem he sees with the Joint Chiefs attitude toward the media is not limited to that level of the Pentagon. Within the ranks, it is "in vogue (to believe) that the press spokesmen [who probably leak to reporters anyway] should be kept in the dark as to what is really going on, thus staunching leaks. . . ."

The military's own public affairs directors later testified before the government panel that studied the controversy. To the person, they strongly supported the media criticisms. "I think the press should be totally unencumbered and able to report what they see," said Maj. Gen. Lyle Barker Jr., then Army chief of information. And, Navy Capt. Brent Baker, that service's deputy information chief, added that "there's a whole generation of reporters who don't have military experience. I'm not sure they don't think we're all not ogres, either" (sic).<sup>35</sup>

In a letter to The Washington Post, retired Navy Rear Admiral David M. Cooney also defended the press. Journalists, he wrote, "can be brave, professional and imaginative, and they have more credibility than any military spokesman ever will."<sup>36</sup>

Barry Zorthian, a former vice president of Time and a government spokesman during the Vietnam War, said in defense of the press that he had "never met a reporter yet who was interested in deliberately jeopardizing our armed forces by

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<sup>35</sup>As quoted by Andrew Radolf in "Press Escorts Suggested," Editor and Publisher, (18 February 1984): 10.

<sup>36</sup>"Now, How Will Unfettered Media Cover Combat?" by Barry Zorthian, The New York Times, 12 September 1984, p. 25Y.

revealing tactical military information. . . that would be useful to an enemy field commander."<sup>37</sup>

### Public Opinion

Letters and phone calls to various publications and broadcast outlets, although very unscientific measurements, were indicative of strong public sentiment on the Grenada press ban. NBC's Chancellor wrote that he was shocked by the letters he received. Almost universally they supported "keeping the press out (as) a good idea." The letter below was typical of the many that strongly supported the government's action in its control of press access to Grenada:

Dear John, Ordinarily I would ignore what you said about the President curbing the press, but I think you should know where I was when I heard you. I was at my golf club with a scotch and soda in my hand, along with about fifty other guys. When you said what you did about the administration doing things behind the back of the people, some guy yelled, 'well, you dumb bastard, what do you think we elected Reagan for? It's damned sure you were never elected.'<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>"The Media and the Military (Cont'd)," The Washington Post, 1 November 1984, p. A14.

<sup>38</sup>Chancellor, "The Media," p. 27.

Other publications and broadcast outlets had similar responses from readers and viewers. A 4 to 1 majority of viewers of the Atlanta-based Cable News Network vocalized support for the Reagan Administration. The Mutual Radio network's nationally syndicated Larry King Show found 75 percent of its listener-callers in favor of the government's Grenada press curb. Mail received by the major television networks came in at near a 10 to 1 ratio in support of the Reagan Administration. A Washington Post reader wrote in to the newspaper with this statement:

Thoughtful citizens everywhere are rejoicing in the liberal press's discomfiture about the way the Reagan administration and the Defense Department 'controlled the news.'<sup>39</sup>

An unidentified Defense Department spokesman reportedly told a Washington Post reporter, "I guess most of the people think I don't have to tell you a damn thing."<sup>40</sup>

But the heat of the moment may have contributed to those with strong anti-media feelings voicing their

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<sup>39</sup>Neil D. Swan and C. David Rambo, "Public Backed Blackout? Polls Inconclusive," Presstime, (December 1983): 25.

<sup>40</sup>Carl Sessions Stepp, "In the Wake of Grenada," The Quill 72, (March 84) p. 12.

opinions. Indeed, when the initial controversy had died down, two scientific polls conducted found evidence that the initial reactions to the press curbs were less than conclusive. One such poll was conducted by the Washington Post and ABC News from Nov. 3-7, 1983. The data came from some 1,505 people who were selected randomly. The poll results showed that a ". . . plurality of the American public thought the government was wrong in restricting Grenadan coverage."

In response to the question, "Would you say the U.S. government has tried to control news reports out of Grenada more than it should or not?" 48 percent of respondents said yes, 38 percent said no, and 14 percent were undecided.<sup>41</sup>

Another poll was conducted by the Los Angeles Times from Nov. 12-17, 1983. In that survey, 2,004 respondents were contacted on a random basis. Results indicated that Americans had favored the news blackout in Grenada by a 52 percent to 41 percent margin while 7 percent were undecided on the matter. But by a 2 to 1 margin that poll's respondents said they did not favor similar future restrictions on war coverage. The poll's results also indicated 75 percent of Americans believe that journalists who accompany combat

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<sup>41</sup>Swan and Rambo, "Public Backed Blackout?", p. 25.

troops "perform a necessary service," while only 17 percent said that reporters were harmful to such efforts. Eight percent were not sure.<sup>42</sup>

The Times' poll also showed that only 34 percent of Americans believed the Reagan Administration's contention that concern for the safety of journalists was a factor in the decision not to allow journalists in at the invasion's start. The Times reported that a fourth of those polled said "they thought the real reason was that the government 'wanted to prevent the reporting of unfavorable news.'" Another 30 percent said they thought the reason was to keep reporters from revealing military secrets.<sup>43</sup>

Journalism educator Richard Clurman has concluded that the polls, although somewhat mixed, may well reflect a phenomenon within the news media to behave like any other self-serving group when criticized. He wrote that the public perception is that the media ". . . demand access to government and to other institutions and interests, but resist being as open to inquiry about themselves." The public may

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid. And, "The Times Poll: Bare Majority Backs Grenada News Blackout," by Jack Nelson, Los Angeles Times, 20 November 1983.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

have lost its patience with such actions, he wrote, calling for journalists to "start making their case, in words and in conduct, better than they have" if they hope to keep from "exasperating the public, whose support they need to preserve their protected and crucial vigor."<sup>44</sup>

Ron Dorfman, who viewed the administration's handling of Grenada as radically wrong, agreed "the media have got some fences to mend" if public perception is to change. He asserted that the press cannot do it alone: it must recruit "allies -- in Congress, in the universities, in the business community, among labor unions, and in the military itself."<sup>45</sup>

Whatever the true sentiment of the public is, critic Michael Massing asked whether

. . . the public's attitude (was) a cause or an effect of the government's policy? Would Americans be so ready to embrace the (media) exclusion if they knew what they didn't learn as a result of it?

He claimed that "once reporters did make it onto Grenada, enough information emerged to indicate that the operation

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<sup>44</sup>Richard M. Clurman, "Who Cared that the Press Was Kept Out of Grenada," American Society of Newspaper Editors Bulletin, (18 February 1984): p. 18.

<sup>45</sup>Dorfman, "Bring the War Back Home," p. 16.



did not go exactly as Administration officials (had) described it."<sup>46</sup>

An article by Lyle Denniston in The Quill gave an excellent description of many of the fundamental precepts that the news media and government may face in the aftermath of Grenada. The future of the media-military relationship, he wrote, may depend on addressing problems such as these:

- \* First both sides (should) recognize that the Vietnam experience has altered, probably for all time, how the press and the military regard each other. . .

- \* Second, the press -- or at least some significant part of it -- has grown a lot bolder in insisting upon access to cover all forms of government activity. . .

- \* Third, there is a real prospect of division in the ranks of the press. What the Pentagon may be willing to offer could turn out to be acceptable to the print media, but fall well short of satisfying the distinctly different needs of the broadcast media. . .

- \* Fourth, and most important, the press may have to be willing to accept a significant responsibility, shared with the military, to keep the military's secrets -- at least for a time.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Massing, "Grenada, We Will Never Know," p.15.

<sup>47</sup>Denniston, "Planning," p. 11.

### **Sidle Panel Testimony and Recommendations**

In response to the news media outcry over Grenada, a government panel was appointed by then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John W. Vessey, Jr., to study issues raised. Its purpose was to make recommendations on this question, among others:

How do we conduct military operations in a manner that safeguards the lives of our military and protects the security of the operation while keeping the American public informed through the media?<sup>48</sup>

To chair the panel, General Vessey chose retired Maj. Gen. Winant Sidle, formerly the Army's chief spokesman in Vietnam during that war, and widely respected by the news media.<sup>49</sup>

The panel membership was originally to include media representatives, public affairs representatives of the four branches of the military, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs. Members of the news media, however, declined to sit on the panel. They

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<sup>48</sup>Report by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Media-Military Relations Panel (Sidle Panel), p. 1.

<sup>49</sup>. Sidle is now director of corporate relations for Martin Marietta Corporation in Orlando, Florida. Creed C. Black, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, praised Sidle's appointment, noting that Sidle "knows the workings" of media-military relations from his experience in a career spanning 35 years.

stated they believed it would be inappropriate for them to participate on a government panel. Sidle instead selected non-military members of the panel from journalism schools and from the ranks of retired journalists who were experts in the field of military-media relations.

The panel met Feb. 6-10, 1984, at the National Defense University in Fort McNair, Washington D.C. It first heard presentations in open session for three days, and then went into closed session for the remaining two days it met. Testimony was heard from a variety of groups that included news media representatives, educators, and the military.

Creed C. Black, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, testified at length. His remarks concentrated on the historical cooperation that media and military had previously enjoyed. He viewed the events of Grenada as having marred that relationship and called for a return to an earlier era. "We are not asking you to invent -- or re-invent -- the wheel. . . . We are asking instead for practices that have traditionally been accepted in this nation's history," Black said. He cited Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's meeting with reporters before the World War II D-Day invasion. Eisenhower had told reporters that

they would be allowed to report "everything possible consistent with military security. . . because our country fights best when our people are well informed."<sup>50</sup>

The panel was also presented with a "statement of principle" from ten media groups that included Black's organization and others that represented newspaper publishers, magazine editors, Associated Press editors, broadcasters, and radio and television news directors. The statement called for top-level civilian and military officials to "reaffirm the historic principle that American journalists, print and broadcast. . . should be present at U.S. military operations." It called for the public, through a free press, to "be independently informed about actions of its government." The committee also heard the variety of complaints and criticisms, in one form or another, already detailed earlier in this chapter. The panel's completed report contained eight detailed recommendations on how the military-media relationship might be improved after the events of Grenada.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Black, "Opening Remarks."

<sup>51</sup>. Sidle Report. And, "Why Military Ought to Take Media Along," Broadcasting, 16 January 1984, p. 122.

The commission's first recommendation made it clear that its members felt a breakdown in planning had occurred in the Grenada invasion. ". . . Public affairs planning for military operations (should) be conducted concurrently with operational planning," the report stated. As far as panel members were concerned, there was no significant role played by government public affairs specialists in the Grenada planning -- from the president's press secretary to the public affairs officers within the military.<sup>52</sup> "The panel was unanimous in feeling that every step should be taken to ensure public affairs participation in planning and/or review. . . ." In practical terms, the recommendation suggested a "planning cell" be formed in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff "with adequate public affairs representation."<sup>53</sup>

The panel's second recommendation centered on the need for media pools to be implemented as "the only feasible means of furnishing the media with early access to an (military) operation." While the media testimony was almost

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<sup>52</sup>"Press Secretaries and Military Operations," by Godfrey Sperling Jr., The Christian Science Monitor, 1 November 1983, p. 22.

<sup>53</sup>Sidle Report, p. 7.

unanimous in opposition to pools, the report concluded nonetheless that the press "would cooperate in pooling agreements if that were necessary for them to obtain early access to an operation." The report emphasized the need for "full coverage" to be allowed as soon as possible after an operation had begun. The committee specifically recommended composition of a stand-by media pool that would include as members reporters from both AP and UPI along with a photographer from either news service; a two-person television crew at a minimum (noting that the networks would prefer six to include one reporter and a technician from each major network); and, a reporter and one photographer from the ranks of news magazines. There would also be a reporter representing daily newspapers.<sup>54</sup>

In its third recommendation, the question of whether or not to "pre-establish" the pools was addressed. The panel could not agree with unanimity as to who should make the decision on the composition of pool members. "There was no agreement as to whether DoD (Department of Defense) should have approval authority of the individuals named to be pool members," the report stated, although it noted that "media

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid, pp. 8-10.

representatives were unanimously against such approval (authority). . . ." The panel members themselves were divided on the issue. Some were in agreement with the press consensus, while others said they believed that "in the case of an extremely sensitive operation, DoD should have authority."<sup>55</sup>

The panel's fourth recommendation was concerned with access and voluntary compliance with "security guidelines or ground rules established and issued by the military." The panel noted that the media were totally in favor of a voluntary system as opposed to "formal censorship of any type." It was recognized that ". . . (such an) arrangement would place a heavy responsibility on the news media to exercise care so as not to inadvertently jeopardize mission security or troop safety." The panel recommended that any guidelines instituted should be similar to those used in the Vietnam conflict, because most in the news media agreed the ground rules used there had worked relatively well.<sup>56</sup>

The committee's fifth, sixth, and seventh recommendations dealt with media support in terms of staff and

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid, p. 12.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

equipment. Plans should "include sufficient equipment and qualified military personnel. . . to assist correspondents" in their coverage, the report said. Controversy was apparent over the role military "escorts" might play, however. The news media testified that such representatives might be more welcome "at the beginning of an operation," but said they would be less willing to have them along after having become familiar with the scene themselves. There was total opposition to escorts ". . . if their goal was to try to direct, censor, or slant coverage." The panel sidestepped the issue by stating that it would be up to "the senior on-scene commander (to) decide how long escorting would continue. . . ." The sixth recommendation addressed the issue of technological requirements "to assure (the media) earliest feasible availability" of needed equipment. The media were unanimous in "preferring provision for use of their own communications. . . when possible." Otherwise, they pointed out, access would have to be granted to military communications that had not worked well in the past. "Permitting media coverage without providing some sort of filing capability does not make sense," the report concluded. The seventh recommendation simply underlined the need for provision of "intra- and inter-theater transportation



support for the media" and was not considered too difficult a problem. The panel concluded that transportation should be handled as in past conflicts when reporters rode on government vehicles whenever space was available.<sup>57</sup>

The final recommendation centered on improving media-military understanding and cooperation. Suggestions were made on the need for regular interaction between the media and military to discuss mutual problems. The panel also called for educational programs within the military to foster understanding of the media's role in society. It cited the need for the development of similar programs designed to involve the military leadership actively in journalism organizations. Further, the report called for meetings on the growing technological needs of the television medium.<sup>58</sup>

In an addendum to the report, General Sidle was optimistic for the future. He concluded that:

An adversarial-- perhaps politely critical would be a better term -- relationship between the media and the government. . . is healthy and helps guarantee that both institutions do a good job.

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid, pp. 14-15. See pp. 147-49 for more on this topic.

However, this relationship must not become antagonistic -- an 'us versus them' relationship.<sup>59</sup>

The news media, he stated, should not be "a lap dog nor an attack dog but, rather, a watch dog." In Sidle's letter to General Vessey, which was submitted with the panel's recommendations, he wrote that had the panel's recommendations been "in place and fully considered at the time of Grenada, there might have been no need to create our panel."

#### **Reactions to the Sidle Report**

Pentagon spokesman Michael I. Burch reacted to the Sidle Commission report by revealing that changes in planning procedures had already begun. They would require the Joint Chiefs of Staff to have input from public affairs officers in military operational plans. A Joint Chiefs of Staff Public Affairs planning cell had been created, he said. The Defense Department would also soon include in

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid, p. 16. And, "Covering Wars and Invasions: Defense Department Makes Public the Recommendations of the Sidle Commission for Press Access to Military Actions," Editor and Publisher, (1 September 1984): 14.

its training curricula information for officers on the role of the media and how to work with them during operations. Planning had also begun, according to Burch, to create a "rotating pool" of journalists who could be contacted on short notice when action was imminent. Those journalists would be "sworn to absolute secrecy about their activities until the military had lifted the news embargo." In agreeing to such a system, however, Burch left no doubt that the choice of media pool members would be the military's. Burch also said the pool system would be tested in:

. . . mock operations in order to learn how well the system works, whether reporters honored the secrecy requirements and to prevent reporters from assuming that a call from the Pentagon meant that an actual operation is about to start.<sup>60</sup>

On the issue of accreditation procedures, an area the Sidle report had skirted perhaps due to the difficulty of finding a consensus on the matter, Burch noted the logistical problems that had occurred at Grenada. Public affairs officers there had difficulties sorting out who was a legitimate reporter when 600 journalists, many of them

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<sup>60</sup>"Covering Wars," Editor and Publisher, p. 15. How tests of such pools have fared since the government tested them in response to the Sidle panel recommendation, is discussed in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

free-lancers and stringers, had shown up with other news media and were competing for "seats on the press plane."<sup>61</sup>

Another reaction came from White House Deputy Spokesman Larry Speakes, who had become outraged when he was forced into the appearance of dishonesty by the handling of Grenada. Speakes, who later claimed he was not told of the invasion until an hour after the U.S. was into it, had responded to reporters' questions about the island being invaded by telling them the idea was "preposterous." Lou Cannon of the Washington Post wrote, "Even the Soviets and Cubans were told before Speakes." Speakes agreed with the Sidle commission that news media coverage had been "overlooked" in the planning process. He added that ". . . I think we probably could have preserved secrecy with a very small pool of reporters involved from the first."<sup>62</sup>

Many journalists reacted positively to the Sidle

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid. On the matter of reporter selection, Col. Robert O'Brien, then deputy to Burch, said that "'ideological' screening of reporters was 'crazy' and definitely would not take place." O'Brien was quoted in "The Continuing Battle Over Covering Wars," by Charles Mohr, The New York Times, 14 September 1984.

<sup>62</sup>"ANPA, Other Press Groups Decline to Serve on Sidle Committee," Presstime, (February 1984): 35. And, "Two Big Wins in Grenada," by Lou Cannon, The Washington Post National Weekly Edition, 21 November 1983, p. 29.

report. But that positive reaction somewhat tempered by the Pentagon's response, Charles Mohr of The New York Times reported. What drew journalistic criticism were remarks made by DoD's Burch. He explained that future press policy would still be decided by the Pentagon on a "case-by-case" basis.<sup>63</sup>

The Sidle report also seemed to silence calls by some journalists for law suits to be filed over Grenada. Even before the the panel met, many had said that legal actions were probably not worth filing. "I did not think it was an issue we were likely to get a good result on if we sued," said Lou Boccardi, executive editor of the Associated Press. New York Times managing editor Seymour Topping added:

By the time the administration was challenged seriously, and the Sidle Commission appointed, there was a tacit admission on the part of the administration that they (had) made a mistake.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Mohr, "Continuing Battle." Burch has since left government service.

<sup>64</sup>"Most Editors Oppose Suing the Government Over Grenada Ban," Editor and Publisher, (19 May 1984): 12. However, Larry Flynt, publisher of Hustler magazine, filed suit in U.S. District Court in Washington D.C. anyway (Flynt vs. Weinberger, 21 June 1984). The judge ruled the case moot, "since the press ban was lifted. . . two days after the military intervention began, 'there is no relief the court can give plaintiffs that they do not already enjoy'." ("Mass Media," The United States Law Week, 17 July 1984, un-numbered page).

### Twentieth Century Task Force Report

The Twentieth Century Fund, a private research group, also sponsored a Grenada military-media study. Their recommendations were published in a book by former Vietnam correspondent and historian Peter Braestrup. While many of the task force's findings were similar to those noted in the Sidle Commission report, unfortunately they were worded even more generally than the Sidle recommendations.<sup>65</sup>

The first task force recommendation called for a clearer understanding of the role of the news media in wartime. "Accordingly," the report stated, "the Task Force believes that the presence of journalists (in U.S. military conflicts) is not a luxury but a necessity." The report stated that even though the press system is not perfect, its independence serves as a vital line between the war scene and the American people:

. . . (the press) report(s) on the military's successes, failures, and sacrifices. By doing so, the media have helped to foster citizen involvement and support, which presidents, admirals, and generals have recognized as essential to military success.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Braestrup, Battle Lines. The task force report is found from pp. 3-13. It included 13 prominent members from media and military circles.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid, pp. 3-4.

The task force's second finding argued that the Grenada press exclusion set a dangerous precedent. The report cited historical evidence in which the media, for reasons of security, have maintained news "embargoes" or restrained coverage at the request of the government. It also noted that it viewed the role of the press as not a part of "mobiliz(ing) public opinion for war." If a war is debated at home, the report said, the debate should be covered just as it was in the Korean and Vietnam wars. "The Task Force believes that (the Grenada) breach need not have occurred, and that no valid security reason existed for excluding all reporters from the immediate post-assault phase," the report stated. Just as in the Sidle report, the task force also called for planning by the administration to establish an emergency reporting pool that could accompany troops on major operations.<sup>67</sup>

The third panel finding dealt with the question of civilian control of the military. The report noted that the president did not call together the Sidle Commission -- the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff did. The report stated that the Secretary of Defense

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid, p. 4.

. . . has yet to give unequivocal support to the notion that information policy is a civilian responsibility and not one that can be delegated, as it was during the Grenada invasion, to military commanders. . . . The Task force believes that just as the president and his civilian deputies bear the responsibility for prosecuting a war, so must they assume responsibility for policy decisions on press access and censorship.<sup>68</sup>

Also, on the question of access, the report called for the matter not to become immersed in the courts because the issue should not become "clouded by legal ambiguity."

. . . the Task Force believes it is healthier for the press and for our democratic polity if such complicated constitutional issues are not left to the courts. . . . (we) prefer to see press access to combat operations arranged, as in the past, through cooperative understandings between government and news media.<sup>69</sup>

Member Samuel P. Huntington dissented, however, stating

. . . it is unnecessary to invoke a mythical 'right of access.' The First Amendment protects the right to speak and publish; it provides no right of access to anything. In addition, (those) rights. . . are not limited to any class of people. . . . it could not give a right of access to military operations to journalists without giving it to all Americans -- which it obviously does not.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid, p. 6. The question that the government asks in such situations should be "How do we get (reporters) in?" and not "How can we keep them out?" the report added.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid, p. 6.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.



The study also pointed out that likely future conflicts will not be in the mode of World War II, where the press were "on the team." Battles will probably be in countries where the "host governments" could be hostile to U.S. reporters. The report stated, that in such cases, the government should initiate:

. . . vigorous diplomatic efforts to ensure, at a minimum, the access of American reporters to American forces. Public support for 'secret' U.S. military operations, or inadequately reported ones, will not long endure.<sup>71</sup>

Just as the Sidle report emphasized the need for planning, so did the task force findings. They called for a "public affairs annex" to become a routine part of all military plans.

To ensure the maximum flow of information to the public and the government, the Task Force recommends that the secretary of defense reemphasize the importance of Department of Defense public affairs officers, both civilian and military. Senior field commanders should recognize that such officers serve as important conduits, via the news media, to the citizenry and government. They should be treated, by superiors and field officers, as 'insiders,' participating in the planning of impending military operations and serving as informed spokesmen for the field commander in the war zone.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid, p. 7.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

The task force also called for "clearly stated 'ground rules,' such as existed in Vietnam," but excluding field censorship of the sort that was mandated in the world wars.

These guidelines, voluntarily adhered to by journalists and enforced by the field commander, delineate those pieces of information, such as troop movements or unit identification in battle, that could imperil U.S. forces if reported by journalists. . . . A censorship system may tempt military officials to invoke the rationale of security to black out news that might simply be embarrassing.<sup>73</sup>

The task force said that such rules should be laid down in "broad outlines" with the commander in the field left free to decide upon the "procedural details." Those who violated the rules would be subject to sanctions set down well in advance.

News organizations should impress upon reporters sent into combat zones the importance of scrupulous adherence to such rules to ensure that their effectiveness is not compromised by journalistic competitiveness or irresponsibility.<sup>74</sup>

The report described a "culture divide" between the two disciplines of journalism and the military; a divide that the task force believed to be "in danger of widening"

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid, p. 8.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

because the two fields have traditionally attracted "different personality types." The report stated:

Of necessity, military people are schooled to respect tradition, authority, and leadership; obedience is an inescapable part of military life. In contrast, because journalists on occasion have the job of challenging official wisdom, their ranks tend to be filled with those who are more free-wheeling, irreverent, and skeptical of authority.<sup>75</sup>

The report stated that the widening of this divide is probable because of the end to conscription in 1972, the "large-scale avoidance" of the draft by college-educated males during Vietnam, the move of a greater number of women into journalism, and the "myths" about the media's role in Vietnam.

We do not believe that the gap between the two cultures can -- or should -- be closed, but we recommend that steps be taken to keep what was traditionally a healthy adversarial relationship from deteriorating into antagonism. . . . The task force therefore recommends that news organizations urge the directors of the mid-career training programs for journalists at a number of major universities, as well as the heads of schools of journalism, to hold seminars and other functions

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid, p. 9. Although the data in Chapter Six seem to support this view, the author finds this generalization weak. A visit to a fighter squadron, for instance, would find that irreverent and free-wheeling personalities are standard among pilots. From experience, the author has encountered various newspaper editors who are as rigid and authoritarian in leadership style as any military commander he has met.

with military people so as to broaden journalists' familiarity with their military counterparts. . . . The Task Force also recommends that the Defense Department offer brief, field-familiarization programs to reporters from major news organizations.<sup>76</sup>

For the military, the task force recommended that programs be instituted that would:

. . . encourage greater sophistication among its officers about the First Amendment, the role of a free press in American society, journalistic processes, and the limitations and strengths of American journalism generally. Courses dealing with these issues should be part of the core curriculum at mid- and senior-level service schools. . . .<sup>77</sup>

Finally, the task force recommended that the news media should take seriously such indicators as opinion polls, which show the public questioning the credibility of journalists. The report stated, "We strongly recommend that the media not ignore the current popular resentments and suspicions reflected in the attitude of many military people." It noted that many in the military have called for a more "responsible press" although, it said, such critics have usually failed to provide a definition of responsibility. The task force supplied its own definition:

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid, pp. 9-10.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid, p. 10.

We see responsibility as news organizations assigning people with knowledge of military affairs to cover combat, and second, of their insisting on reporting and editing that are as fair, accurate, and sophisticated, and comprehensive as battlefield circumstances permit. . . . In addition, we believe that a diversity of news media coverage, along with more vigorous media self-scrutiny, are the public's best protection against journalistic sins.<sup>78</sup>

#### **The Role New Technology May Play**

Both the Sidle panel and the task force touched rather briefly on the role new technology is bound to play in the future of the military-media relationship. NBC commentator Chancellor, for one, has long noted that refined technologies that allow the means for instant communications have raised questions that must be answered:

War reported by quill pens was more bearable to the folks at home than living room wars brought to us on videotape by satellite. . . . How should a government deal with the public's right to know if that right to know erodes the support the public gives the government?<sup>79</sup>

Chancellor pointed to statistics that show some "65 percent

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid, p. 12-13.

<sup>79</sup>Chancellor, "The Media," p. 32.

of the American public. . . depend on television as their prime source of news." Likewise, Ed Fouhy, chairman of the Radio and Television News Director Association Freedom of Information Committee, testified before the Sidle panel that broadcasters' interests must be independently considered. The unique need for the television medium to be a direct witness of events is of primary importance if the medium is to be at its most effective. Fouhy testified:

. . . (television is) particularly vulnerable to censorship because (transmissions) have to pass through a satellite ground station choke point before reaching home offices in New York and elsewhere. . . The temptation could be great for a government censor to attempt to manipulate reality.<sup>80</sup>

Sidle panel member Zorthian, also wrote about the need to consider the inherent dangers that may come about with live television:

What will happen when we have 'real time' television coverage of the battlefield? Won't early electronic transmission of raw news reports and unedited videotape provide the watchful enemy with critical information about our positions, weapons, casualties and maneuvers?<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Ed Fouhy, "Grenada Update for RTNDA Communicator," RTNDA Communicator, (March 1984):10.

<sup>81</sup>Zorthian, "Now, How Will Unfettered Media," p. 25Y. Zorthian served in Vietnam from 1964-68.

The Sidle panel, rather than issue extensive recommendations on this question, avoided the issue. Instead, it called upon the Secretary of Defense to meet in the future with broadcasters to discuss their medium's "special problems." The task force, as well, addressed the question only briefly. It found that:

Television is not, per se, a threat to the security of U.S. military operations. Potential problems with live transmission of videotape that might pose a hazard to U.S. combat forces can be resolved through mutual agreements. . . . The field commander must be the final arbiter of what constitutes a threat to the security of his operations. Advised by civilian authorities and guided by his public affairs officer, he must decide when and how to accommodate television. . . .<sup>82</sup>

Underscoring lack of unanimity on the issue, task force panelist Charlayne Hunter-Gault, a correspondent for PBS, dissented, stating the task force recommendation might:

. . . (set) a different standard for television journalists than for print -- to wit, if there are only three seats on the plane, the priority is print, and then the field commander can do whatever he wished with the television people.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>"Panel Advises Press Be Included In Military Activity," Broadcasting, (14 May 1984): p. 43. And, Braestrup, Battle Lines, pp. 11-12.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid. Hunter-Gault's experience at Grenada may have had something to do with the disagreement. She and her television crew were, at one point, split up by public affairs officers. A reporter without a crew cannot perform.

Certainly the role that technology, particularly television, will play in future conflicts requires much more discussion and thought.

### **News Media Concern Lingers**

Fred Hiatt of the Washington Post was still not very optimistic about the future when, one year after the invasion of Grenada, the Pentagon had not released a critique its experts had prepared of how the invasion went. It remained classified "SECRET." He claimed that:

. . . (such) secrecy allows the Pentagon to dodge accountability. . . . (which) reflect(s) a growing tendency within the Pentagon to release only information that will make (it) look good. Embarrassing information is kept secret, while self-serving facts are aggressively put forward, blurring the line between public information and public relations.<sup>84</sup>

While he admitted that this is nothing new, he still charged that the rationale behind Grenada may be in part because the Reagan Administration's attempts to control information "seem to go beyond traditional practices,

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<sup>84</sup>"Pentagon Stifles Reports that Might Embarrass," by Fred Hiatt, Columbia Daily Tribune, October 27, 1984, p. 5. (C) Washington Post.



stemming from a view that perception of military strength is as important as strength itself." The danger with such a policy, he argued, is that it may well allow failures to be hidden from the public "as well as from any undeclared enemy. . . ." He wrote that the continued absence of public debate and questioning might "encourage the Pentagon to believe its own propaganda -- which can allow real weaknesses, as opposed to perceived ones, to persist."<sup>85</sup>

Zorthian wrote that the ground rules the members of the panel had developed were "based on the responsibility and integrity of the independent media." He emphasized, that for the guidelines to work, news organizations must prepare now for the responsibilities they would probably meet if thrust into covering a combat situation. Appropriate financial investments beforehand are necessary in terms of both staff and resources. He concluded that with the government apparently ready to cooperate in improving its planning after the controversy that Grenada had stimulated, "the focus now (had) shift(ed) to the press. . . . It will be interesting to see how they (will) respond to the challenge."<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Zorthian, "Now, How Will Unfettered Media," p. 25Y.

### **What the Future May Hold**

The Twentieth Century Task Force argued that what they termed a "culture gap" between the military and press must be recognized and addressed for the military-media relationship to improve. The report said, "if anything, (the divide is) particularly pronounced between young military officers and reporters." If these two groups are moving apart, what might be done to aid in their understanding of one another? What should military students be taught in the officer training programs when it comes to interaction with the news media? And, what should journalism students know about the members of the armed forces with whom they will likely encounter? What are these young officers and reporters, future leaders in their respective fields, thinking about one another? Do the journalists view the military as "ogres," as Sidle panelist Captain Baker stated? Do military cadets perceive the media as an enemy rather than a partner in democracy? Are the two groups even remotely prepared to work together if another war were to take place in the future? It is hoped that a questionnaire conducted by the author to survey attitudes of military and journalism students serve as a start in the search for some answers to these questions. Its findings form the chapter that follows.

## Chapter Six

### Military-Media Questionnaire Design and Methodology

#### The Research Problem

The Twentieth Century Task Force's report described what the panel termed a "culture gap" between the military and the press. The panel argued that this gap must be understood and addressed for the military-media relationship to improve. The report concluded that, "if anything, (the divide is) particularly pronounced between young military officers and reporters."

Braestrup, too, contended that there is a cultural divide. When the two cultures meet in wartime, he described the general situation as follows:

The military culture, with its accent on conformity, control, discipline, accountability, group loyalty, and cohesion, finds itself in wartime up against a group that is individualistic, competitive, word conscious, impatient, lacking internal "rules" or "standards," varied in its needs, suspicious of authority, and hard-pressed by deadlines and the need to obtain good film or definitive information on short notice to satisfy the home office.<sup>1</sup>

If these two groups are moving apart, what might be

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<sup>1</sup>Braestrup, Battle Lines, p. 141.

done to aid in their understanding of one another? What should military students be taught in the officer training programs about interaction with the news media? And, what should journalism students know about the members of the armed forces whom they will likely encounter?

It was determined that a potential starting point to answer these important questions would be to analyze the attitudes of the students who will soon become the military officers and reporters of the future, in the light of our study of the historical development of this relationship in the previous chapters. The scope of the problem would require research that would determine whether the gap the task force described actually does exist. Questions that would need to be answered would include what the two groups are thinking in regard to various national issues. What do they think about one another? Do these journalists of the future view the military as "ogres," as Sidle panelist Captain Baker stated? Do the military's cadets perceive the media as their "enemy" rather than as a partner in the democratic form of government they share? Would these two groups be even remotely prepared to work with one another if a war were to take place in the future?

It was determined that in the limited time available to

this research project, a questionnaire would be the most cost-effective and feasible means for the study:

### **Methodology and Sample Selection**

An important step in the design of the questionnaire was to determine the audience to which it would be administered. On the military side, practical logistical limitations made it readily apparent that not all officer candidates within the ranks of the military's various officer training programs could be questioned. Personally administering the questionnaire at the service academies would have required time away from the campus. The researcher would also have incurred excessive financial costs for travel. The same would have applied to an effort conducted at the various Officer Training Schools. Such travel became a moot point when it was determined that the long lead time required to have the military approve the questionnaire would prove a prohibitive factor in the timely completion of the study.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>According to the U.S. Air Force Institute of Technology officials, 60 to 90 days would have been required just for the questionnaire to be approved for dissemination.

Thus, with a probability sample not a feasible alternative, it was decided to limit the study and the questionnaire to students in a non-probability study. Students who would still represent "typical" groups within the military and journalism educational communities could be chosen, however. The solution was one that would ensure the military sample would be representative at least in that it would include students destined for the three main service branches. The respondents chosen were cadets within the University of Missouri-Columbia's three reserve officer training programs. Commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force units gave the author permission to administer the questionnaire to their students on the condition that the students individually could decide whether or not to participate.

Also, for logistical purposes, the scope of the study was narrowed to include only members of the senior classes within those military detachments. It was these students, after all, who would soon join the military officer corps. Their attitudes would most closely reflect the attitudes held by the "young officers" that the Twentieth Century Task Force study described.

The journalism sample was obtained through cooperation

of instructors and students in the University's School of Journalism. Seniors in the school's undergraduate journalism history and news reporting classes were selected as respondents.

#### **Questionnaire Design**

The questionnaire was developed in the summer semester of 1985 through a series of face-to-face interviews conducted with students in both the Air Force program and the journalism school. The interviews ranged from five to twenty minute individual sessions with eight students. Open-ended questions were raised on various military-media issues such as the students' perceptions of such events as Vietnam and Grenada. To ensure that no students would be interviewed who would later be involved in the actual survey sample, only military students in their freshman through junior years were interviewed. Similar precautions were taken for the journalism interviews.

From these discussions with students, over a period of several weeks, a set of more precisely drawn questions was developed. Then, with the aid of the thesis chairman, questions from that initial effort that were considered

either too imprecise or redundant were eliminated. After this editing process had taken place, another version of the questionnaire was finalized. It contained thirty questions. This was determined to be a reasonable number for a planned ten to fifteen minute response period, in a classroom setting without any previous announcement. The final version of the questionnaire also contained space for respondents to provide any further written comments that they felt would be helpful or pertinent to the study.

#### **Pre-testing the Questionnaire**

No questionnaire, regardless of how carefully developed, may be assumed adequate or valid until given a trial. Therefore, the questionnaire was tested under circumstances that would be similar to those used later in the classroom. Two groups of students within the military and journalism programs were given the pilot questionnaire. The students completed the questionnaire in the planned time frame of ten to fifteen minutes. The author requested their aid in identifying questions that they considered to be difficult to understand or ineffectual in determining their attitudes



on the subject. Extremely helpful suggestions were made by these pre-test respondents in regard to the rewording of some of the questions in the final thirty chosen. A suggestion was also made for clarifying the instructions for questions that required the students to rank-order responses. However, no questions were determined to be either too difficult or ineffectual. The final questionnaire appears in the Appendix. Each question is also found among the individual tables that accompany the findings detailed in Chapter Seven.

#### **Administering the Questionnaire**

In the fall semester of 1985, 75 questionnaires were distributed to instructors in the military programs based on the number of students within the senior classes of the programs. Of that number, 27 went to the Army unit, 28 to the Navy, and 20 to the Air Force. The instructors within the Army and Air Force classes administered the questionnaire in normal class meetings. The Navy instructor distributed the questionnaire to her students in class, but requested that students complete it out of class and for its

return it at a later date. Of the 75 questionnaires, 48 were eventually returned.<sup>3</sup>

Also, in the fall semester, 75 questionnaires were distributed to seniors in the Journalism School. Students in the history class were given the questionnaire at the beginning of one class and asked to return it at the next class. Several were returned late in the three week period that followed. Others were distributed in the Columbia Missourian newsroom. Students either completed the questionnaire on the spot or agreed to return the document a few days later. Of the questionnaires distributed to the journalism group, 46 were eventually returned.<sup>4</sup>

#### Analyzing and Testing the Data

The questionnaire was computer tabulated by a technician who used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences computer program through the University of

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<sup>3</sup>Fifteen were returned from Army students, 15 from the Navy program, and 18 from the Air Force cadets.

<sup>4</sup>Twenty-six were returned from the history class. Twenty were returned from the reporting class.

Missouri-Columbia computer system. The results were printed in a cross-tabulated format to allow for a ready comparison of the responses in the journalism and military sub-groups. The SPSS program automatically tested the cross-tabulated data for statistically significant differences. Spearman's rank-order correlation tests were performed in the case of the five questions in the questionnaire that required rank-order correlation. These tests were performed by hand calculations with the assistance of Dr. Won Chang, Professor of Communications and Research in the School of Journalism. Numerically weighted scales had first been devised to rank-order those questions before the Spearman calculations were used.

#### **Weaknesses of the Questionnaire**

The major weakness of most questionnaire or survey instruments of this nature is that they only picture attitudes at one moment in time. Had the journalism seniors in the history class, for instance, been questioned at a point later in the fall semester, they would have heard considerably more lecture material on the historical

military-media relationship. Had that been the case, perhaps their opinions would have been somewhat different.

Similarly, if U.S. forces were sent tomorrow into another experience similar to Grenada, opinions of both groups of students could change as rapidly as events in that military action. Naturally, much would depend on the military-media policies that the government would choose to follow.

Had the respondent audience been much larger, interesting cross breaks within the various branches of the various service groups on various questions would may have also provided interesting data. The limited sample size prohibited such analysis, however.

### **The Findings**

Findings from the questions are related in the order that they appeared in the questionnaire. Tables that apply to each individual question accompany the text of the analysis. Students' written comments as they relate to particular questions are found throughout the chapter. Interestingly, military students contributed far more written comments than the journalism students did.

### 1. Media Objectivity

The first question sought to determine the feelings of respondents on the objectivity of the U.S. news media coverage of events and issues. Table 1 indicates a large percentage of both groups felt the media were "usually objective and fair." The Chi square test indicated their respective views were significantly different, with journalism students -- not surprisingly -- more favorable.

Results indicated that military students have less confidence in the media's ability to cover events and issues fairly. This perception is a trend throughout the questionnaire. It may well also indicate a lack of understanding of the military in respect to the media's role as the "Fourth Estate" critic and watchdog of the government, or indeed, of all society.

None of the students in the military group felt the media were always objective, while one respondent (2.2 percent) in the journalism group felt this to be the case.

In the second category, 19 respondents, or 39.6 percent, stated they felt the media were "usually objective and fair" in their reporting. Thirty-three, or 71.7 percent of journalism students, answered similarly.

Fourteen, or 29.2 percent of the military students,

said the media were only "occasionally objective and fair." Four students (8.7 percent) in the journalism sample felt similarly.

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TABLE 1

Media Objectivity

Do you think the U.S. news media are generally "objective" and fair in their coverage of events and issues, or do they usually favor one particular viewpoint?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
0 (0.0%)	1 (2.2%)	always fair and objective
19 (39.6%)	33 (71.7%)	usually objective and fair
14 (29.2%)	4 (8.7%)	occasionally objective and fair
10 (20.8%)	8 (17.4%)	often not objective and fair
4 (8.3%)	0 (0.0%)	rarely objective and fair
0 (0.0%)	1 (2.2)	no response

$$\chi^2=15.51, df=5, p<.05$$


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Ten military students, or 20.8 percent, said the media were "often not objective and fair." Eight, or 17.4 percent of the journalism students, responded in this category.

Only 8.3 percent, or 4 respondents in the military group, felt the media were "rarely objective and fair." None

of the journalism students answered in this category.

One student in the military group gave an invalid response to the question.

In a written comment at the end of the questionnaire, a journalism student wrote that this question and others that dealt with objectivity were "moot." She wrote that, "No reporter is objective. . . . they can only hope to be fair."

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**TABLE 2**

**Trust in Various Media**

What sources of news do you trust most and least? Rank order the media listed below, using a scale of 1 through 4, with 1 meaning greatest trust and 4 meaning least trust.

**Rank Order of Media\***

<b>Military</b>	<b>Journalism</b>
1. newspapers	1. newspapers
2. magazines	2. magazines
3. radio	3. television
4. television	4. radio

\* See Tables 2a through 2d for individual statistical data.

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**2. Trust in Various Media**

This question was designed to allow students to rank order the various media they trust most and least for news.

Table 2 shows that newspapers were generally the most trusted medium for news, with television the least trusted news medium. This question is related to question 26, in which the findings were, in effect, identical. It also should be noted that the ratings are relative to each group -- military students throughout rate all media lower in their trust rankings as the results from other questions will show.

#### Radio

The Chi Square test showed there was a significant degree of difference in the radio category, with the military trusting the radio medium much more than the media. Table 2a showed that only 4 military respondents, or 8.3 percent, said they trusted radio the most. Only 3 journalism students, or 6.5 percent, responded that they found radio to be most trustworthy.

Seventeen, or 35.4 percent of military respondents, rated radio as their second most trusted news source. Only 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) selected that response.

Leading the responses was a 39.6 percent, or 19 military students, who ranked radio third on their list in terms of trustworthiness. Twenty journalism students or 43.5 percent also rated radio their third trusted source.



TABLE 2a

## Radio

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
4 (8.3%)	3 (6.5%)	most trusted
17 (35.4%)	4 (8.7%)	second most trusted
19 (39.6%)	20 (43.5%)	third most trusted
7 (14.6%)	18 (39.1%)	least trusted
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	no response

$$x^2=13.02, df=4, p<.05$$

Seven students, or 14.6 percent in the military group, ranked radio in last place. Some 39.1 percent, or 18 journalism students, agreed that radio was their least trusted medium for news.

One student in each group gave no answer.

**Newspapers**

The Chi Square test showed there was not a statistically significant difference. Table 2b showed that both groups rated newspapers as their number one choice as the

medium they most trusted for news. In the military group, 21 respondents (43.8 percent) said they trusted newspapers the most. Twenty-six, or 56.6 percent, of the respondents in the journalism group, answered similarly.

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**TABLE 2b**  
**Newspapers**

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
21 (43.8%)	26 (56.5%)	most trusted
13 (27.1%)	14 (30.4%)	second most trusted
9 (18.8%)	4 (8.7%)	third most trusted
4 (8.3%)	1 (2.2%)	least trusted
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	no response
$\chi^2=4.25, df=4, p>.05$		

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Newspapers were the second place selection of 13 respondents (27.1 percent) in the military group, while 14, or 30.4 percent of journalism students, selected this answer.

Nine military students (18.8 percent) placed newspapers third in trustworthiness, while 4 journalism students

(8.7 percent) gave a similar response.

Four military students (8.3 percent) picked newspapers as their least trusted news source, while only one (2.2 percent) of the journalism group answered similarly.

One student in each group did not respond to the question.

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**TABLE 2c**

**Television**

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
10 (20.8%)	4 (8.7%)	most trusted
6 (12.5%)	10 (21.7%)	second most trusted
6 (12.5%)	12 (26.1%)	third most trusted
25 (52.1%)	19 (41.3%)	least trusted
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	no response

$$\chi^2=6.35, df=4, p>.05$$


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**Television**

Television was the last choice of each group in the trustworthiness rating. The Chi square test showed there was not a statistically significant degree of difference.

Table 2c showed that 10 students (20.8 percent) in the military group felt television was their most trusted news source. Only 4 (8.7 percent) of the journalism students answered similarly.

Six military students, or 12.5 percent, placed television second, while only 10 journalism students (21.7 percent) did.

In the military group, six students also placed television third on their list. Twelve journalism students, or 26.1 percent of respondents, said television was their third most trusted medium.

Some 52.1 percent, or 25 military students, ranked it last. Nineteen of the journalism students (41.3 percent) also trusted television least.

One student in each group did not answer the question.

### **Magazines**

This sub-category found 11 military respondents, or 22.9 percent, trusting magazines the most. Fifteen journalism students, or 32.6 percent, also felt magazines most trustworthy. The Chi Square test showed there was not a significant statistical difference.

The largest number of respondents in each group placed

magazines in second place on the trust scale. Fifteen, or 31.3 percent, in the military group selected this choice, while 16 (34.8 percent) answered with the second response in the journalism group.

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**TABLE 2d**

**Magazines**

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
11 (22.9%)	15 (32.6%)	most trusted
15 (31.3%)	16 (34.8%)	second most trusted
11 (22.9%)	8 (17.4%)	third most trusted
10 (20.8%)	6 (13.0%)	least trusted
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	no response

$$x^2=2.08, df=4, p>.05$$


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Eleven military students (22.9 percent) placed magazines third on their list. Eight students in the journalism group, representing 17.4 percent of respondents, answered similarly.

Ten (20.8 percent) of military students ranked magazines last, while 6, or 13 percent in the journalism group, least trusted magazines.

One student in each sub-group chose not to answer the question.

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**TABLE 3**

**Role of Media in U.S. Wars**

Concerning news coverage of U.S. wars, what do you think the role of the news media ought to be in covering wars?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
4 (8.3%)	0 (0.0%)	Should always support the military as a "team player"
18 (37.5%)	3 (6.5%)	Should usually support the military as a "team player"
24 (50%)	41 (89.1%)	Should be an objective observer reporting good or bad
1 (2.1%)	2 (4.3%)	Should be objective but concentrate on wars' inhumanity
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	Should always advocate an end to the war

$$\chi^2=20.46, df=4, p<.05$$


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**3. Role of Media in Coverage of Wars**

This question asked students to consider what they felt should be the role of the U.S. media in covering wars.

Table 3 shows that most respondents in each group answered

that they felt the news media should serve as "an objective observer, reporting good or bad." However, there was a statistically significant degree of difference according to a Chi Square test. While the journalism students viewed the role of the media as staying objective, we see again an indication that many of the military students view the media's role atypically to the accepted media norm. An 8.3 percent block of the cadets said the media "should always support the military as a 'team player'" while 37.5 percent said the media should "usually" do so. Again, this may be an indication of a lack of knowledge of the media among the cadets.

Twenty-four students in the military group (50 percent) selected this answer, while nearly all journalism students did. That total included 41 percent, or 89.1 percent, of journalism respondents.

The second most popular response among the military group was the choice which stated that the media "should usually support the military as a 'team player.'" Eighteen military students (37.5 percent) made this selection. However, only three of the journalism respondents (6.5 percent) felt the same.

Four military students (8.3 percent) said the media role should be to "always support the military as a 'team

player.'" No journalism students marked this selection.

One military student said journalists should cover wars objectively, but should "concentrate on wars' inhumanity." Two journalism students (4.3 percent) answered in this category.

No students in either group selected the answer that journalists should "always advocate an end to the war."

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**TABLE 4**

Recall your study of history for a moment. If you were to rate the relationship between the U.S. news media and the military from World War I to the Grenada conflict, what rating would you give that relationship?

**Rank Ordering of Wars\***

Military	Journalism
1. World War II	1. World War II
2. World War I	2. Korea
3. Korea	3. World War I
4. Grenada	4. Vietnam
5. Vietnam	5. Grenada

\* See individual tables for statistical analysis of data for each period.

Spearman's Test: Rrank=.8, P<.001.

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**4. Historical Military-Media Relationship**

This question sought students' opinions on the U.S. military-media relationship from World War I through



the recent Grenada invasion. Table 4 depicts the students' rank ordering of the military-media relationships in each war. Spearman's rank order correlational test indicated a statistically significant correlation with journalism students' views more accurately reflecting the actual historical pattern. It may well be that many of the journalism students have more accurate perceptions of history than do the military students due to the required Journalism History and Principles course many have or were taking at the time of the questionnaire. Their rating of World War I nearer to the bottom of their list is the prime indicator. Indeed, one journalism student pointed out that her views had changed drastically after she had attended the Journalism School's history course. The professor who taught the course had been "very persuasive. . . . Many of my answers are (the professor's) views," she wrote.

The cadets' rating of the Grenada battle above the military-media relationship of Vietnam -- even with all the uproar over it -- is another similar indicator. It is also possible that, in general, cadets are more favorable of the military actions taken in each case, with that perception flavoring their more positive ratings in each category.

Tables 4a through 4e show a variation between military and journalism students. Vietnam was viewed as a particularly bad period by the military students just as Grenada was in the eyes of the journalism students. Military students felt that the World War I era was generally a more favorable period for military-press relations, while journalism students rated the period less favorably. One journalism student concluded:

All things considered, one must realize that . . . (wartime) media news coverage is not very good because the government does keep much from the media and distorts information, as seen during Vietnam.

#### World War I

A Chi Square test showed a significant degree of statistical difference in the student group responses. Seventeen military students, or 35.4 percent, said this period had been an excellent one. Only 4 (8.7 percent) in the journalism group answered similarly.

Another 22 military students (45.8 percent) said the period was "good." Fourteen journalism students, or 30.4 percent, gave the same response.

Only 4 military students rated the period as "fair," as opposed to 15 in the journalism group (32.6 percent).

Three military students (6.3 percent) rated the period as "bad," while 11 journalism students, or 23.9 percent, selected that response.

Two students in each group did not answer the question.

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**TABLE 4a**

**World War I**

If you were to rate the relationship between the U.S. news media and the military (in) World War I. . . .

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
17 (35.4%)	4 (8.7%)	excellent
22 (45.8%)	14 (30.4%)	good
4 (8.3%)	15 (32.6%)	fair
3 (6.3%)	11 (23.9%)	poor
2 (4.2%)	2 (4.3%)	no answer

$$x^2=20.73, df=4, p<.05$$


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**World War II**

Some 56.3 percent, or 27 military students, felt the World War II period was "excellent." Only 7 journalism students, or 15.2 percent, agreed with this choice. A Chi Square test showed there was a statistically significant degree of difference.

Fifteen in the military group (31.3 percent) said the period was a "good" one. Journalism respondents rated the period "good" at a 43.5 percent rate (20 students).

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**TABLE 4b**

World War II

If you were to rate the relationship between the U.S. news media and the military (in) World War II. . . .

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
27 (56.3%)	7 (15.2%)	excellent
15 (31.3%)	20 (43.5%)	good
1 (2.1%)	13 (28.3%)	fair
3 (6.3%)	4 (8.7%)	poor
2 (4.2%)	2 (4.3%)	no answer

$$\chi^2=22.88, df=4, p<.05$$


---

One military student rated the period as "fair," while 13 journalism students, or 28.3 percent, felt the same.

Three military students (6.3 percent) and 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) rated the period as "poor."

Again, 2 students in each of the two groups failed to answer the question.

## Korea

A Chi Square test indicated there was a statistically significant degree of difference with military students' views generally more favorable of the Korean military-media relationship than were the journalism students. The Korean conflict military-media relationship was rated "excellent" by only one military student, and no journalism students.

---

**TABLE 4c**

### Korea

If you were to rate the relationship between the U.S. news media and the military (in) Korea. . . .

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	0 (0%)	excellent
29 (60.4%)	14 (30.4%)	good
13 (27.1%)	23 (50.0%)	fair
3 (6.3%)	5 (10.9%)	poor
2 (4.2%)	4 (8.7%)	no answer

$$x^2=10.14, df=4, p<.05$$


---

Twenty-nine military students, or 60.4 percent, rated the period "good." Fourteen, or 30.4 percent of the journalism students, selected this answer.

Thirteen military students (27.1 percent) rated the period "fair." Fifty percent, or 23 students in the journalism category, also selected this choice.

Three military students (6.3 percent) and 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) described the period as "poor."

Two military students and four journalism students did not answer.

---

**TABLE 4d**

**Vietnam**

If you were to rate the relationship between the U.S. news media and the military (in) Vietnam. . . .

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	4 (8.7%)	excellent
5 (10.4%)	10 (21.7%)	good
11 (22.9%)	12 (26.1%)	fair
30 (62.5%)	18 (39.1%)	poor
1 (2.1%)	2 (4.3%)	no answer

$$x^2=6.80, df=4, p>.05$$


---

**Vietnam**

A Chi Square test indicated there was not a statistically significant degree of difference. Most students agreed

that was a "poor" period for press-military relations.

Only one military student rated the period excellent, while four journalism students or 8.7 percent thought so.

Five military students (10.4 percent) rated the period "good." Ten students in journalism (21.7 percent) agreed.

Eleven cadets (22.9 percent) thought the period was "fair," while 12 journalism students (26.1) answered similarly.

Thirty military students (62.5 percent) and 18 journalism students (39.1 percent) rated the period "poor."

One cadet and two journalism students did not answer this question.

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**TABLE 4e**

**Grenada**

If you were to rate the relationship between the U.S. news media and the military (in) Grenada. . . .

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
3 (6.3%)	1 (2.2%)	excellent
11 (22.9%)	3 (6.5%)	good
21 (43.8%)	13 (28.3%)	fair
12 (25.0%)	28 (60.9%)	poor
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	no answer

$$x^2=13.82, df=4, p<.05$$


---

### **Grenada**

A Chi Square test indicated there was a statistically significant difference on the Grenadan military-media relationship. Military students rated military-media relations in the Grenada invasion much more positively than their journalism counterparts.

Three military students (6.3 percent) said the period was excellent, as opposed to only one journalism student.

Eleven military students (22.9) percent said the period had been "good." Only 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) selected this choice.

Twenty-one military students, or 43.8 percent, rated the period "fair." Thirteen journalism students (28.3 percent) agreed.

Twelve military students (25 percent) labeled the period "poor," while 28 journalism students, or 60.9 percent, thought the period was "poor."

One student in each group failed to answer.

### **5. Vietnam Coverage as Hindering Governmental Decision-Makers**

This question sought the views of students on whether or not Vietnam news coverage had hindered U.S. decision makers in their conduct of the war. Table 5 shows that most



students in both groups felt that, indeed, news coverage was a stumbling block in the Vietnam decision making. A Chi Square test indicates there was a statistically significant degree of difference, however. Military students' perceptions, again, may well be flavored by the higher rating they gave in regard to how the Vietnam war was fought (see question 8). The cadets' views may also reflect their generally lower trust and confidence in the media found in the responses to the questions throughout.

Twelve military students (25 percent) said decision makers "always" felt hindered by news media coverage. Only one journalism student agreed.

Fifteen cadets (31.3 percent) stated that media coverage "usually" hindered decision making. Eight journalism students (17.4 percent) answered similarly.

The military group had 19 respondents (39.6 percent) who felt that media coverage "sometimes" hindered decision making, while 26 journalism students, or 56.5 percent, thought so.

No students in the military group thought the media coverage "rarely" hindered governmental decisions, while 19.6 percent, or 9 journalism students, said it did.

Just one military student said media coverage "never"

hindered decision making, while 2 journalism students also selected this choice.

One military student did not answer the question.

---

**TABLE 5**

**Vietnam Coverage as Hindering Government Decision-Makers**

What about the coverage of the Vietnam war? Do you feel that news media coverage of the Vietnam conflict hindered the United States' decision makers in their conduct of the war?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
12 (25.0%)	1 (2.2%)	always hindered
15 (31.3%)	8 (17.4%)	usually hindered
19 (39.6%)	26 (56.5%)	sometimes hindered
0 (0.0%)	9 (19.6%)	rarely hindered
1 (2.1%)	2 (4.3%)	never hindered
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	did not answer

$$x^2=22.83, df=5, p<.05$$


---

**6. Views on National Security**

This question revealed student views on whether U.S. national security was a viable reason for governmental leaders to keep information away from reporters in wartime for national security reasons. Three specific scenarios were

given for students to choose from. Tables 6a through 6c show the results. Chi Square testing on all three scenarios indicated a high degree of significant statistical differences in students' views on each scenario. In general, the pattern of greater support among the cadets for censorship to be instituted in all three scenarios again reflects limited trust in the media. It may also reflect either some misunderstanding of the media's role as "watchdog" or a view that such a role is not as important as the journalism students feel that it is.

One journalism student complained that the scenarios involved were hypothetical situations. In today's military actions, she wrote, ". . . the answers are not black and white -- there are gray areas."

A military student offered these written views on the question:

I am a supporter of the media's right to free speech. I am also quite committed to the need of the military to provide national security. There is an extremely fine line between the media's right to information and the military's responsibility to release information. I feel that more often than not the issue comes down to being a contest of who can get what from whom. A little more maturity on the sides of both parties would result in a much more satisfied American public as well as the press and military.

### Pending Invasion

The first scenario was "a pending invasion." By far, most military students said it was "absolutely" within the government's right to withhold information, while there was more division of views among journalism respondents. Forty-one military students (85.4 percent) answered "absolutely," while thirteen journalism students (28.3 percent) answered "absolutely."

---

**TABLE 6a**

#### Pending Invasion

Analyze your specific views of the "military-media relationship" in regard to war reporting. Is concern for "national security" a valid reason for government officials keeping information from reporters concerning:

A pending invasion?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
41 (85.4%)	13 (28.3%)	absolutely
4 (8.3%)	18 (39.1%)	probably
3 (6.3%)	15 (32.6%)	only rarely
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	never

$$\chi^2=31.34, df=2, p<.05$$


---

Only 4 cadets (8.3 percent) said it was "probably" okay

for the government to withhold information. Eighteen (39.1 percent) of journalism students, also made that response.

Three military students said it was "only rarely" permissible for the government to withhold information, while 15 journalism students (32.6 percent) said so.

No students in either group selected the choice that it was "never" okay for governments to withhold information.

---

**TABLE 6b**

**An Invasion Taking Place**

Analyze your specific views of the "military-media relationship" in regard to war reporting. Is concern for "national security" a valid reason for government officials keeping information from reporters concerning:

An invasion taking place?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
21 (43.8%)	7 (15.2%)	absolutely
19 (39.6%)	12 (26.1%)	probably
8 (16.7%)	14 (30.4%)	only rarely
0 (0.0%)	13 (28.3%)	never

$$x^2=23.18, df=3, p<.05$$


---

**Invasion Taking Place**

Students' views in this scenario were more divided,

although the majority of military students still maintained that government was within its rights to withhold information. A total of 21 military students (43.8 percent) again said the government had an "absolute" right to withhold information. Only seven journalism students, or 15.2 percent of respondents, felt similarly.

Nineteen cadets (39.6) said it was "probably" alright, while 12 journalism students, or 26.1 percent, agreed with this selection.

Eight military students (16.7 percent) said it was "only rarely" right for government to withhold information, while 14 journalism students or, 30.4 percent, answered similarly.

No military students chose the category "never," while 13 journalism students said national security was never a valid reason for government to withhold information on an invasion taking place.

#### **An Invasion Completed**

The majority of military students still maintained that national security was a valid reason for withholding information about an invasion already completed, while the majority of journalism students felt just the opposite.

Seven military students (14.6 percent) still maintained that national security was "absolutely a valid reason" for the government to withhold information in an invasion already completed. Only one journalism student thought so.

Twelve cadets (25 percent) said it was "probably" a valid reason, while no journalism students chose this response.

---

**TABLE 6c**

**An Invasion Completed**

Analyze your specific views of the "military-media relationship" in regard to war reporting. Is concern for "national security" a valid reason for government officials keeping information from reporters concerning:

An invasion completed?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
7 (14.6%)	1 (2.2%)	absolutely
12 (25.0%)	0 (0.0%)	probably
21 (43.8%)	15 (32.6%)	only rarely
8 (16.7%)	30 (65.2%)	never

$$\chi^2=30.21, df=3, p<.05$$


---

Twenty-one cadets, or 43.8 percent, of military respondents said it was "only rarely" okay. Fifteen, or 32.6

percent of journalism students, felt similarly.

Eight military students answered national security was "never" a valid reason to withhold information. Thirty journalism students, or 65.2 percent, selected "never."

---

**TABLE 7**

**Reporter Safety**

Should concern for the personal safety of journalists be a sufficient reason for keeping reporters from invasion or battle scenes?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
4 (8.3%)	0 (0.0%)	absolutely
14 (29.2%)	7 (15.2%)	probably
20 (41.7%)	19 (41.3%)	only rarely
10 (20.8%)	20 (43.5%)	never

$$x^2=9.66, df=3, p<.05$$


---

**7. Reporter Safety**

This question sought to determine views on whether or not the personal safety of reporters was a "sufficient reason" for the government to keep them from invasion or battle scenes. Table 7 showed that opinion was divided on this issue, although more military students approved of



keeping reporters away for their safety than did journalism students. A Chi Square test indicated there was a significant statistical difference. The findings may also indicate that the cadets more readily accepted the Reagan Administration's argument (see Chapter 5) that a prime reason it had kept the news media out of Grenada was concern for reporters' safety. On the other hand, the journalism students' views indicate they did not accept the government's stated position.

Two cadets offered written views on the question. One voiced qualified support for the media to accompany the forces:

If the presence of the reporters will not hinder the strategic mission at hand, let them be present and take the risks that the military personnel take. Their personal safety should be their own responsibility.

However, the other offered this stern warning for reporters who broke the ground rules in his war zone:

If I was a field commander and a reporter caused a death of one of my men by negligently reporting on something we were doing that should have remained confidential, I would be tempted to replace the dead man with the reporter.

Statistical results show that four cadets (8.3 percent) stated "saftey" was absolutely a reason for keeping

reporters away, while no journalism students chose this response.

Fourteen military students (29.2 percent) said it was "probably" sufficient rationale for keeping reporters away. Seven journalism students (15.2 percent) responded similarly.

Twenty cadets (41.7 percent) said it was only rarely a reason, while 19 journalism students (41.3 percent) also stated this response.

Ten military students (20.8 percent) said it was "never" a sufficient reason. Some 43.5 percent (20 students) in the journalism group also said safety was "never" a sufficient reason.

#### **8. Grenada Press-Barring Constitutionality**

This question sought student opinion on the constitutionality of the government's decision initially to bar reporters from the military action at Grenada in 1983. A Chi Square test indicated there was a significant statistical difference. The question asked whether students felt that action was unconstitutional. A majority of military students thought it was not an unconstitutional action, while the majority of journalism students thought it was. The views of

the military students, again, may reflect their general trust and acceptance of the government's actions in the Grenada war. Journalism students generally felt just the opposite, trusting the government's actions less.

Only one military student thought it was "definitely" a constitutional violation, while 54.3 percent (25 students) in the journalism group said it was.

---

**TABLE 8**

**Grenada Press-Barring Constitutionality**

Recall the Grenada invasion of two years ago. In a break with tradition, the U.S. Government initially barred reporters from the island and later allowed them in after most of the fighting was over. In your opinion, was the decision to bar reporters from the invasion a violation of the U.S. Constitution?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	25 (54.3%)	definitely
11 (22.9%)	16 (34.8%)	perhaps
12 (25.0%)	5 (10.9%)	probably not
23 (47.9%)	0 (0.0%)	definitely not
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	no answer

$$\chi^2=49.94, df=4, p<.05$$


---

Eleven cadets (22.9 percent) said it was "perhaps" a

violation. Sixteen, or 34.8 percent of journalism students, agreed.

Twelve military students (25 percent) and 5 journalism students stated that the press-barring was "probably not a violation."

Some 47.9 percent (23 cadets) of military students said it was "definitely not a violation," while no students in the journalism group picked this choice.

One military student did not answer the question.

---

**TABLE 9**

**Responsibility for Grenada Press-Barring**

In your opinion, who was responsible for keeping the media from being "on the scene" when the invasion took place?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
10 (20.8%)	4 (8.7%)	civilian leaders
4 (8.3%)	9 (19.6%)	military leaders
33 (68.8%)	32 (69.6%)	both civilian and military

$$x^2=4.47, df=3, p>.05$$


---

**9. Responsibility for Grenada Press-Barring**

This question addressed the question of who in the government was responsible for the barring of reporters from

the Grenada invasion. Table 9 showed that the majority of respondents in both groups said they felt that both civilian and military leaders had played a part in the decision to bar reporters from the invasion scene. A Chi square test revealed there was not a significant statistical difference. However, the views of both groups may indicate that they lend some credence to the contention of leaders in the military and civilian government who stated there was not enough time for them to institute plans for the news media to accompany the troops (Chapter 5 has details on the government position).

Ten military students, or 20.8 percent, said that civilian leaders had been responsible, while only 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) felt similarly.

Four cadets (8.3 percent) blamed military leaders for the press-barring. Nine journalism students laid the blame there.

Thirty-three, or 68.8 percent of cadets, and 32 journalism students (69.6 percent), said both civilian and military leaders decided to bar reporters.

One student in each of the group's gave invalid responses to the question.

### 10. Vietnam Influence on Grenada

This question asked whether or not the Vietnam war had anything to do with the U.S. decision to omit reporters from the Grenada invasion. Table 10 shows that the majority of students in both groups believed Vietnam had played a role in the government's Grenada decision-making process. A Chi Square test revealed that there was not a statistically significant difference. However, this question lends itself to speculation that the cadets' general agreement with keeping the press out of Grenada was perhaps influenced by their poor view of the media and military situation in Vietnam.

The journalism students, while opposed to the Grenada press-barring, also agreed that the Vietnam experience was an influence on the government's decision to bar reporters from Grenada.

Nine cadets and 4 journalism students said Vietnam "was absolutely the reason" reporters were left behind.

Thirty military students (62.5 percent) stated it was possibly the reason. Thirty-three, or 71.7 percent of journalism students, answered similarly.

Seven military students (14.6 percent) felt Vietnam was probably not the government's rationale, while 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) agreed.

TABLE 10

## Vietnam Influence on Grenada

What do you think of the contention of some commentators that press coverage of the Vietnam conflict may have been a factor in causing U.S. decision makers to leave reporters behind when U.S. forces initially invaded Grenada?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
9 (18.8%)	4 (8.7%)	absolutely the reason
30 (62.5%)	33 (71.7%)	possibly the reason
7 (14.6%)	5 (10.9%)	probably not the reason
1 (2.1%)	4 (8.7%)	not the reason at all
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	no answer

$$x^2=5.16, df=4, p>.05$$

One military student and 4 journalism students said it was "not the reason at all."

One military student failed to answer the question.

## 11. Wartime Censorship

This question sought to determine attitudes toward wartime censorship. A Chi Square test indicated there was a statistically significant difference, with Table 11 showing that a substantial majority of military students felt the

government should be allowed to censor the information gathered by the media in wartime. Again, the military students' less favorable view of the news media's value or role in informing society, may be reflected here. It may also show the cadets' general lack of confidence in the media's ability to report objectively or accurately. Journalism students, although more divided on the issue, were more in favor of freer information flow than were the cadets.

---

**TABLE 11**

**Wartime Censorship**

What is your opinion of wartime censorship? Should the U.S. government be allowed to censor information gathered by the news media during wartime?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
22 (45.8%)	2 (4.3%)	absolutely yes
19 (39.6%)	21 (45.7%)	occasionally only
4 (8.3%)	13 (28.3%)	probably not
3 (6.3%)	10 (21.7%)	absolutely never

$$x^2=25.27, df=3, p<.05$$


---

A cadet expressed written views on the question.

He wrote:



I believe that freedom of the press to report on and criticize our military and government is essential to our way of life. However, I think the press should be kept out of impending invasions. . . . Broadcasting these events prematurely takes away from the element of surprise (and) endangers the success of (the) mission. Could we have won at Normandy or the Pacific Islands if the enemy knew all the details of our plans simply by reading The New York Times?

This response, however, shows the student may have a mis-impression of the historical military-media relationship. The media were not kept out of the invasions he cited. And no responsible news media wished to reveal the U.S. invasion plans of the Grenada battle. What they wanted was to be there from the beginning -- to report on events as they occurred -- just as they did at Normandy and in the Pacific.

The statistical break down on the question shows that twenty-two military students (45.8 percent) answered "absolutely yes" when asked whether or not the government should be allowed to censor. Only 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) felt similarly.

Nineteen cadets, or 39.6 percent, felt that it was permissible for government to censor "occasionally only," while 21 journalism students (45.7 percent) selected this response.

Only 4 military students (8.3 percent) said it was "probably not" proper for the government to censor journalists' information, while thirteen journalism students (28.3 percent) responded similarly.

Also, only three military students said the government should "absolutely never" censor the press in wartime, as opposed to 10 journalism students (21.7 percent) who selected the same answer.

## 12. Military Freedom of Speech

This question sought opinions on whether military officers should be allowed to speak freely on matters of foreign policy, or whether their remarks should be subject to review to make certain that they upheld governmental policy. Table 12 showed that military and journalism students were largely in disagreement. A Chi Square test revealed a highly significant statistical difference.

Question 12 may indicate that, as the Twentieth Century Task Force report contended, military people are generally more accepting of authority and control than are their journalistic counterparts. It may also be that the cadets have less confidence in their fellow officers' personal viewpoints than they do for the "corporate line." To that

way of thinking, perhaps they feel their contemporaries' opinions should be tempered by government control.

Several military respondents commented on the question.

One student wrote:

I believe that military officers should be able to state their opinions if they first state that this is his/her own opinion and not of the U.S government and that U.S. government's policy will be the one that the military officer will follow.

However, another wrote that military officers are better off not airing their true feelings. "Military officers are supposed to fight wars, not political battles. For precedent, look at (General) MacArthur," he added.

---

**TABLE 12**

**Military Freedom of Speech**

Should military officers be allowed to speak freely on matters of foreign policy or should their remarks be subject to review to make certain they uphold the government position?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
30 (62.5%)	1 (2.2%)	officers speech controlled
17 (35.4%)	45 (97.8%)	officers should speak freely
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	invalid response

$$x^2=40.75, df=2, p<.05$$


---

The statistical data showed that thirty military students (62.5 percent) stated that "officers' speech should be controlled." Only 1 journalism student thought so.

Seventeen cadets felt that officers should be allowed to speak freely. A total of 97.8 percent of journalism students (45 students) thought military officers should have the right to express themselves freely.

One military student gave an invalid response.

### **13. Role of Military Public Relations Officer**

This question asked students to provide their views on what the role of military public relations officers ought to be. Table 13 shows cadets were almost evenly divided over whether officers should be good news promoters while answering up to bad news, or if such officers should disclose both good and bad news. A majority of journalism students felt that military PR officers should disclose good and bad news equally. A Chi square test indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference.

However, the results from Table 13 may also indicate, as the response to Question 3 did, that military students feel that "advocating" their cause is quite proper. The similar statistical data from the journalism students may

indicate that 34.8 percent feel that -- right or wrong -- the reality of the situation is that military public relations will probably "promote" good news over bad.

---

TABLE 13

Role of Military Public Relations Officer

What about military public relations officers? What do you think their role ought to be in serving their military unit?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
3 (6.3%)	1 (2.2%)	promote "good" news only, while hiding the bad
25 (52.1%)	15 (32.6%)	promote "good news," but answer up to the bad
20 (41.7%)	30 (65.2%)	disclose both good and bad news equally

$$x^2=5.46, df=2, p>.05$$


---

Only 3 military students (6.3 percent) and one journalism student said the role of such officers should be to "promote 'good' news only, while hiding the bad."

Twenty-five cadets (52.1 percent) thought that military PR officers should "promote 'good' news, but answer up to the bad." Fifteen journalism students (32.6 percent) answered similarly.

Twenty cadets (41.7 percent) said PR officers should "disclose good and bad news equally," while 65.2 percent (30 students) of the journalism group thought this was the proper role of PR officers.

#### 14. Military-Media Relationship Future

This question sought attitudes on the future of the military-media relationship. Students were asked whether or not they thought the two groups were "too far apart in their respective ideologies to ever 'get along.'" The Chi Square test showed that there was a statistically significant difference. Majorities in both groups, however, felt the ideological differences between press and military were too great for the fields ever to completely resolve their differences, as Table 14 showed. This cynicism may will be indicative that both groups are well aware their respective disciplines are, by their very nature, often at odds.

A total of 62.5 percent in the military student group (30 cadets) responded that the groups "may never" resolve their differences. Forty-one journalism students, or 89.1 percent, agreed with this assessment.

Sixteen military students (33.3 percent) thought that the two groups "probably can resolve most of their

differences." Only 4 journalism students thought so.

One military student gave no answer. One military and one journalism student gave invalid responses.

---

**TABLE 14**

**Military-Media Relationship Future**

In regard to your opinions on the "military-media" relationship on the whole, do you think the media and the military are too far apart in their respective ideologies to ever "get along?"

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
30 (62.5%)	41 (89.1%)	they may never completely resolve their differences
16 (33.3%)	4 (8.7%)	they probably can resolve their differences
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	invalid responses

$$x^2=11.87, df=4, p<.05$$


---

**15. American Public Served by Military-Media Relationship**

This question asked students how well they felt that the American public will likely be served by the existing military-media relationship in the event of a future U.S. war. The Chi Square test showed there was not a

statistically significant difference. Table 15 shows that the category of "less than satisfactorily" led the responses in both groups, with a majority of journalism students choosing that response.

However, the considerable numbers within both groups who said that the public would be served "well" or "satisfactorily" may indicate that the cynical views espoused in the previous question will not necessarily harm the end product. The view, then, may be that just because the

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**TABLE 15**

**American Public Served by Military-Media Relationship**

Along the same line, how well do you feel the American public is likely to be served in the event of a future U.S. war by the existing relationship between the media and military?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
3 (6.3%)	0 (0.0%)	very well
10 (20.8%)	7 (15.2%)	well
15 (31.3%)	7 (15.2%)	satisfactorily
17 (35.4%)	29 (63.0%)	less than satisfactorily
2 (4.2%)	3 (6.5%)	terribly
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$x^2=10.73, df=5, p>.05$$


---



military-media relationship is less than ideal, or even poor, the public can still be well-informed from the news that comes from the war reporting.

Statistics showed that only 3 military students (6.3 percent) felt the public would be "very well" served, while no journalism students felt that way.

Ten cadets (20.8 percent) said the public would be "well" served, while 15.2 percent of the journalism group (7 students) felt similarly.

Fifteen military students (31.3 percent) said the relationship would serve the public "satisfactorily," while 7 journalism students (15.2 percent) were equally optimistic.

Seventeen cadets or 35.4 percent said the relationship would be "less than satisfactory," however. The journalism group had 29 students who chose this response.

Two cadets (4.2 percent) said the American public would be served "terribly" by the existing relationship. Three journalism students (6.5 percent) agreed with this assessment.

One military student gave no response.

## **16. Institutional Trust**

This question sought to survey student attitudes on

various American institutions -- from the Presidency to college professors -- on a scale with selections that included "total trust," "a lot of trust," "some trust," "little trust," and, "no trust at all." A weighted rank order is provided in Table 16. Spearman's correlational rank order test indicated there was no statistically significant correlation. The individual results are provided in Tables 16a through 16j.

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**TABLE 16**

**Trust in U.S. Institutions**

How much trust do you have in the U.S. "institutions" listed below?

**Rank Order\***

**Military**

1. military
2. Presidency
3. historians
4. professors
5. voters
6. Congress
7. diplomats
8. news media
9. labor unions
10. big business

**Journalism**

1. media
2. historians
3. professors
4. voters
5. Congress
6. diplomats
7. Presidency
8. labor unions
9. military
10. big business

\* Individual statistical breakdowns are found in accompanying tables.

Spearman's Test:  $R_{rank} = .067$ ,  $p = N.S.$

---

### **The Military**

Table 16a showed that students in the military group widely trusted the military, a majority of journalism students had little or "no trust at all" in the armed forces, with a Chi Square test that indicated a highly significant difference. Most importantly, the results directly bear upon the Twentieth Century Task Force's views that the two groups are divided. Indeed, the ratings of each group here (and in earlier results to questions) may reflect that the two groups simply do not place much trust in one another's disciplines. Each rated the other's discipline near the bottom of their "trust" list.

The statistical breakdown shows that thirteen cadets (27.1 percent) said they had total trust in the military, while no journalism students felt similarly.

Twenty-seven cadets (56.3 percent) said they had "a lot of trust" in the military, while only 6 journalism students (13 percent) felt similarly.

Seven cadets, or 14.6 percent, said they had "some trust." In the journalism group, 13 students (28.3) answered with this choice.

Only 1 military student indicated "little trust" for the military, while 22 students in the journalism group

(47.8 percent) felt "little trust."

---

**TABLE 16a**

**The Military**

How much trust do you have in the military?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
13 (27.1%)	0 (0.0%)	total trust
27 (56.3%)	6 (13.0%)	a lot of trust
7 (14.6%)	13 (28.3%)	some trust
1 (2.1%)	22 (47.8%)	little trust
0 (0.0%)	5 (10.9%)	no trust at all

$$x^2=52.31, df=4, p<.05$$


---

No cadets answered in the "no trust at all" category. However, 5 journalism students said they had "no trust at all" in the military.

**The Congress**

Table 16b showed a majority of respondents in both groups had trust in the Congress, although no student in either group had "total trust." A Chi Square test indicated there was not a statistically significant difference.

An even fewer number of students - 2 military and 1 in journalism -- said they "had no trust at all" in Congress.

Twenty cadets (41.7 percent) and 15 journalism students, or 32.6 percent, said they had "a lot of trust."

Twenty-one cadets, or 43.8 percent, said they had "some trust," while 24 journalism students (52.2 percent) answered similarly.

Just 5 military students and 6 journalism students reported that they felt "little trust" for the insitution of Congress.

---

**TABLE 16b**

**The Congress**

How much trust do you have in the Congress?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	total trust
20 (41.7%)	15 (32.6%)	a lot of trust
21 (43.8%)	24 (52.2%)	some trust
5 (10.4%)	6 (13.0%)	little trust
2 (4.2%)	1 (2.2%)	no trust at all

$$x^2=1.3, df=3, p>.05$$


---

### Labor Unions

Table 16c shows that students in both groups held similar views in their level of trust in labor unions. A Chi Square test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference.

Seven military students (14.6 percent) and 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) said they had "a lot of trust" in unions.

Eighteen military students (37.5 percent) and 23 journalism students (50 percent) held "some trust" in labor unions.

---

**TABLE 16c**

#### Labor Unions

How much trust do you have in labor unions?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	total trust
7 (14.6%)	2 (4.3%)	a lot of trust
18 (37.5%)	23 (50.0%)	some trust
18 (37.5%)	17 (37.0%)	little trust
4 (8.3%)	4 (8.7%)	no trust at all
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$x^2=4.38, df=4, p>.05$$


---

Eighteen military students also said they had "little trust" for unions, with 17 journalism students (37 percent) answering similarly.

Four cadets (8.3 percent) and 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) reported "no trust at all" in unions.

### **The News Media**

Table 16d shows that students in the military group varied somewhat greatly in their level of trust for the news media. A majority of journalism students stated they trusted the news media. A Chi Square test indicated there was a high degree of statistically significant difference.

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**TABLE 16d**

#### **The News Media**

How much trust do you have in the news media?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	4 (8.7%)	total trust
10 (20.8%)	31 (67.4%)	a lot of trust
20 (41.7%)	10 (21.7%)	some trust
12 (25.0%)	1 (2.2%)	little trust
5 (10.4%)	0 (0.0%)	no trust at all

$$x^2=30.17, df=4, p<.05$$


---

One military student reported "total trust" in the news media. Four journalism students (8.7 percent) also reported "total trust."

Statistics revealed that 20.8 percent of military students (10 cadets) felt "a lot of trust" in the press. Thirty-one journalism students, or 67.4 percent, felt "a lot of trust."

Twenty military students, or 41.7 percent, said they had "some trust" in the media, while 10 journalism students (21.7 percent) said they felt similarly.

Twelve cadets (25 percent) reported "little trust" in the military, while only one journalism student selected this choice.

Five military students said they "had no trust at all" in the media. No journalism students responded in this category.

### **The Presidency**

The majority of military students had either "total trust" or "a lot of trust" in the Presidency, Table 16e shows. Journalism students gave mixed responses, with the majority of respondents reporting either "some trust" or "little trust." A Chi Square test indicated there was a statistically significant difference.



Thirteen military students, or 27.1 percent of the military group, felt "total trust" in the presidency. Only 1 journalist answered similarly.

Twenty-three cadets (47.9 percent) said they had "a lot of trust," while only 7 journalism students (15.2 percent) answered in this category.

---

**TABLE 16e**

**The Presidency**

How much trust do you have in the Presidency?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
13 (27.1%)	1 (2.2%)	total trust
23 (47.9%)	7 (15.2%)	a lot of trust
10 (20.8%)	21 (45.7%)	some trust
1 (2.1%)	13 (28.3%)	little trust
1 (2.1%)	4 (8.7%)	no trust at all

$$x^2=34.78, df=4, p<.05$$


---

Ten cadets (20.8 percent) indicated "some trust," while 21 journalism students, or 45.7 percent, indicated a similar response.

Only 1 cadet indicated "little trust" in the

TABLE 16f

## Professors

How much trust do you have in professors?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	3 (6.5%)	total trust
25 (52.1%)	25 (54.3%)	a lot of trust
18 (37.5%)	17 (37.0%)	some trust
3 (6.3%)	1 (2.2%)	little trust
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	no trust at all

$$\chi^2=2.99, df=4, p>.05$$

One military student and 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) said they had "total trust" in their professors.

Twenty-five military and journalism students (52.1 and 54.3 percent, respectively) stated they had "a lot of trust."

Eighteen cadets, or 37.5 percent, and 17 journalism students (37 percent) reported "some trust" in their professors.

Only 3 military students (6.3 percent) and one journalism student said they had "little trust."

One military student reported "no trust at all" in professors.

### Big Business

Table 16G shows that military students were more trusting of big business than their journalism counterparts, with the Chi Square test indicating there was a statistically significant difference.

---

**TABLE 16g**

**Big Business**

How much trust do you have in big business?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	total trust
5 (10.4%)	1 (2.2%)	a lot of trust
21 (43.8%)	18 (39.1%)	some trust
16 (33.3%)	24 (52.2%)	little trust
6 (12.5%)	3 (6.5%)	no trust at all

$$x^2=5.46, df=3, p>.05$$


---

Five military students (10.4 percent) said they had "a lot of trust," while only one journalism student responded similarly.

Twenty-one, or 43.8 percent of cadets, and 18 journalism students (39.1 percent) reported "some trust."

Sixteen cadets (33.3 percent) and 24 journalism

students (52.2 percent) said they had "little trust" in business.

Six cadets (12.5 percent) and 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) indicated they had "no trust at all."

### Diplomats

Table 16h shows that the groups differed only slightly in their view of diplomats. A Chi Square test indicated there was not a statistically significant difference.

---

**TABLE 16h**

### Diplomats

How much trust do you have in diplomats?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	total trust
6 (12.5%)	8 (17.4%)	a lot of trust
26 (54.2%)	23 (50.0%)	some trust
14 (29.2%)	14 (30.4%)	little trust
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	no trust at all

$$x^2=1.43, df=4, p>.05$$


---

Six military students (12.5 percent) and eight journalism students (17.4 percent) indicated "a lot of trust" in diplomats.

Twenty-six cadets (54.2 percent) said they had "some trust." Fifty percent, or 23 journalism students, also selected this answer.

Fourteen respondents from both groups (29.2 and 30.4 percent, respectively) reported "little trust" in diplomats.

One student in both groups reported "no trust at all."

### **Historians**

Table 16i shows that military and journalism students' perceptions of historians varied, with military students slightly more skeptical of historians than journalism students. A Chi Square test indicated there was not a statistically significant difference, however.

Six military students (12.5 percent) had "total trust," while 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) answered similarly.

Sixteen cadets (33.3 percent) and 26 journalism students (56.5 percent) reported "a lot of trust" in historians.

Twenty-two military students, or 45.8 percent, and 13 journalism students (28.3 percent) indicated "some trust."

Four cadets (8.3 percent) and 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) said they had "little trust."

No students reported "no trust at all."

TABLE 16i

## Historians

How much trust do you have in historians?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
6 (12.5%)	5 (10.9%)	total trust
16 (33.3%)	26 (56.5%)	a lot of trust
22 (45.8%)	13 (28.3%)	some trust
4 (8.3%)	2 (4.3%)	little trust

$$x^2=5.41, df=3, p>.05$$

## Voters

Table 16j showed that both the military and journalism students groups varied in their trust for voters. A Chi Square test indicated there was not a statistically significant difference.

Four cadets and 4 military students (8.3 and 8.7 percent, respectively) had "total trust."

Nineteen military students (39.6 percent) and 17 journalism students (37 percent) reported "a lot of trust."

Sixteen cadets (33.3 percent) and 15 journalism students (32.6 percent) had "some trust."

TABLE 16j

## Voters

How much trust do you have in voters?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
4 (8.3%)	4 (8.7%)	total trust
19 (39.6%)	17 (37.0%)	a lot of trust
16 (33.3%)	15 (32.6%)	some trust
7 (14.6%)	9 (19.6%)	little trust
2 (4.2%)	1 (2.2%)	no trust at all

$$\chi^2=0.68, df=4, p>.05$$

Seven cadets, or 14.6 percent, and 9 journalism students (19.6 percent) indicated "little trust."

Two cadets (4.2 percent) and one journalism student said they had "no trust at all" in voters.

### 17. U.S. Actions in World Affairs

This question was divided into three sub-categories to determine how students viewed three areas: the war of ideas between the United States and the Soviet Union, news media coverage of world affairs, and U.S. military

strength and preparedness. Tables 17a through 17c show the results. Viewed within the same perspective of the results from Question 19, the term "satisfaction" may generally equate to the media's performance within the scope of the first and third scenarios among journalism students. To the military students, it seems to equate with the "government's role" in the matters.

#### **Conduct of the U.S.-Soviet Ideological War**

Table 17a shows that students in the military group were widely divided on this topic. A majority of journalism students were either "somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" with the information war between the United States and the Soviets. A Chi Square test indicated there was a highly significant difference.

Three cadets (6.3 percent) said they were "extremely satisfied" with the information war, while no journalism students said they were.

Thirteen military students (27.1 percent) marked the "considerably satisfied" response. Only 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) answered similarly.

Fifteen cadets, or 31.3 percent, stated they were "satisfied," while 6 journalism students (13 percent) reported a similar attitude.



TABLE 17a

## Conduct of the U.S.-Soviet Ideological War

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
3 (6.3%)	0 (0.0%)	extremely satisfied
13 (27.1%)	3 (6.5%)	considerably satisfied
15 (31.3%)	6 (13.0%)	satisfied
14 (29.2%)	18 (39.1%)	somewhat satisfied
3 (6.3%)	19 (41.3%)	very dissatisfied

$$\chi^2=25.21, df=4, p<.05$$

Fourteen students, or 29.2 percent of the military group, stated they were "somewhat dissatisfied." Eighteen journalism students (39.1 percent) selected this category.

Only 3 military students (6.3 percent) said they were "very dissatisfied." However, 41.3 percent, or 19 journalism students, reported they were "very dissatisfied."

#### U.S. News Media Coverage of World Affairs

Table 17b shows a range of opinions were evident in both groups of students on the question of how well the media do in covering world affairs. A Chi Square test

indicated there was not a statistically significant difference.

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**TABLE 17b**

**U.S. News Media Coverage of World Affairs**

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	5 (10.9%)	extremely satisfied
10 (20.8%)	10 (21.7%)	considerably satisfied
19 (39.6%)	19 (41.3%)	satisfied
17 (35.4%)	12 (26.1%)	somewhat satisfied
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	very dissatisfied

$$x^2=4.49, df=4, p>.05$$


---

Only one military student was "extremely satisfied" with media coverage of world affairs, while five journalism students (10.9 percent) were grouped in this category.

Ten students from each group (20.8 and 21.7 percent, respectively) said they were "considerably satisfied."

Nineteen from each group (39.6 and 41.3 percent, respectively) reported they were "satisfied."

Seventeen cadets (35.4 percent) indicated they were "somewhat dissatisfied." Journalism students included 12, or

26.1 percent, who reported they were "somewhat dissatisfied."

Only one military student answered "very dissatisfied." No journalism student gave this response.

### **U.S. Military Strength and Preparedness**

A range of opinion was evident on the question of students' satisfaction concerning the nation's military strength and preparedness, as Table 17C shows. A Chi Square test indicated there was not a statistically significant difference between the two groups.

Two military students (4.2 percent) and 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) indicated they were "extremely satisfied."

Thirteen cadets (27.1 percent) said they were "considerably satisfied," while nine journalism students (19.6 percent) selected this answer.

Seventeen military students (35.4 percent) said they were "satisfied." Some 30.4 percent in the journalism group (14 students) chose the same response.

Fifteen cadets (31.3 percent) indicated they were "somewhat dissatisfied," as opposed to 14 journalism students or 30.4 percent who made this selection.

TABLE 17c

## U.S. Military Strength and Preparedness

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
2 (4.2%)	5 (10.9%)	extremely satisfied
13 (27.1%)	9 (19.6%)	considerably satisfied
17 (35.4%)	14 (30.4%)	satisfied
15 (31.3%)	14 (30.4%)	somewhat satisfied
1 (2.1%)	4 (8.7%)	very dissatisfied

$$\chi^2=4.10, df=4, p>.05$$

One cadet and four journalism students (8.7 percent) indicated they were "very dissatisfied" with defense strength and preparedness.

## 18. Perception of Public's Knowledge

This question sought to determine how the students perceived the American public's knowledge, or lack of it, in regard to "problems facing the world." A Chi Square test indicated there was a statistically significant difference. Table 18 shows that half of military respondents and 71 percent of journalism students felt that the American public

are "somewhat lacking in knowledge." Just under 30 percent of military students and 23.9 percent of journalism students said Americans are "totally lacking in knowledge." It may well be that Journalism students feel their chosen mission is an urgent one -- that the public is in dire need of education. This is a paradoxical position, however, in that it does not place much value or credence in the journalists presently performing the function of informing the public.

---

**TABLE 18**

**Perception of Public's Knowledge**

How knowledgeable do you think the average American is about problems facing the world?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
0 (0.0%)	1 (2.2%)	extremely knowledgeable
10 (20.8%)	1 (2.2%)	knowledgeable
24 (50.0%)	33 (71.7%)	somewhat lacking in knowledge
14 (29.2%)	11 (23.9%)	totally lacking in knowledge

$$\chi^2=10.11, df=3, p<.05$$


---

A journalism student's commented that she was concerned that Americans are ill-informed generally, but especially

on the question of the nuclear arms race:

A majority of the American people are dangerously ignorant of the immensely dangerous possibilities presented by the manufacture and use of nuclear arms. I am not a 'flower child.' I am a realist.

The statistical results show that no cadets felt Americans were "extremely knowledgeable," while one journalism student thought so.

Ten cadets (20.8 percent) said they felt Americans were "knowledgeable," as opposed to only one journalism student.

Twenty-four military and 33 journalism students thought Americans were "somewhat lacking in knowledge."

Fourteen, or 29.2 percent, of military students said Americans were "totally lacking." Eleven journalism students chose this response.

#### 19. U.S. and Soviet Arms Race

This question sought to find student opinion on the arms race. Table 19 shows that more military students perceived the U.S. as falling behind in the race, while more journalism students said they perceived the super-powers as "about even." The Chi Square test indicated there was a statistically significant difference in the data in that regard.

Question 19's findings can be related to those in Question 17. In that regard, it may well be that military students relate more to the current administration's views on the need for more arms spending. Journalism students, on the other hand, may not support that view -- and perhaps, are even complacent on the issue.

---

**TABLE 19**

**U.S. and Soviet Arms Race**

How do you feel about the U.S. and Soviet arms race? From your perspective, is the U.S. ahead of the Soviets, about even, or falling behind?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
6 (12.5%)	13 (28.3%)	staying ahead
19 (39.6%)	25 (54.3%)	about even
23 (47.9%)	7 (15.2%)	falling behind
0 (0.0%)	1 (2.2%)	no response

$$\chi^2=12.89, df=3, p<.05$$


---

A journalism student voiced this concern on the issue:

The U.S. has put too much emphasis on being a super power in the military world and has fallen behind in more important areas, such as education -- and the taking care of the hungry of the U.S. and the world. We have the ability to be a great nation but we are drowning in our ignorance and selfishness.

The Table shows that six military students (12.5 percent) said the U.S. military is staying ahead of the Soviets. Thirteen journalism students, or 28.3 percent, thought so.

Nineteen cadets (39.6 percent) viewed the arms race as staying "about even." Twenty-five students (54.3 percent) in the journalism group chose this response.

Twenty-three military students (47.9 percent) and 7 journalism students (15.2 percent) felt that the U.S. had been "falling behind" the Soviets.

One journalism student did not answer the question.

## **20. Defense Policies Effect on Future War Involvement**

This question sought to determine how students felt about U.S. defense and international policies in regard to how those policies might affect U.S. involvement in war. Table 20 reveals that journalism students held a much less optimistic view with a majority of students (67.4 percent) stating their belief that U.S. policies were "increasing the likelihood of war." A Chi Square test indicated there was a statistically significant difference. Just as in the responses to Question 19, the findings here also seem to indicate the military students are more supportive of the



current administration's policies than are journalism students.

Two cadets (4.2 percent) and one journalism student viewed U.S. policies as "making war impossible."

---

**TABLE 20**

**Defense Policies Effect on Future War Involvement**

Do you feel that current defense policies and international relations policies are:

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
2 (4.2%)	1 (2.2%)	make war impossible?
14 (29.2%)	5 (10.9%)	decreasing likelihood of war?
17 (35.4%)	7 (15.2%)	not affecting war chances?
12 (25.0%)	31 (67.4%)	increasing the likelihood of war?
2 (4.2%)	2 (4.3%)	making war a virtual certainty?

$$x^2=18.12, df=5, p<.05$$


---

Fourteen military students (29.2 percent) said that U.S. policies were "decreasing the likelihood of war," while only 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) thought so.

Seventeen cadets, or 35.4 percent, indicated a belief that such policies were "not affecting the probability of war one way or the other." Seven journalism students, or 15.2 percent, indicated this belief.

Twenty-five percent of the military respondents (12 students) felt U.S. policies were "increasing the likelihood of war." Thirty-one journalism students answered similarly.

Only two students in each group (4.2 and 4.3 percent, respectively) viewed national policies as "making war in the near future a virtual certainty."

One military student did not answer the question.

#### **21. U.S. Defense Budget**

This question sought opinions on the U.S. defense budget. The table shows that exactly half of military students thought it should be "increased," while a majority of journalism students (63 percent) felt it should be "reduced." The Chi Square test indicated that a statistically significant difference existed. Predictably, military students were for increased funding for the profession they will soon enter. Journalism students' earlier views in Question 19 (a majority thought the United States was "staying ahead" or "about even" in the arms race) were again reflected here. In general, they do not want defense funding increased.

Nineteen cadets (39.6 percent) said the budget ought to be "kept the same," as opposed to 14 students (30.4 percent) in the journalism group.

TABLE 21

## U.S. Defense Budget

How do you view the U.S. military budget? Should funding for military purposes be kept at current levels, increased or reduced?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
19 (39.6%)	14 (30.4%)	kept the same
24 (50.0%)	3 (6.5%)	increased
4 (8.3%)	29 (63.0%)	reduced
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	no response
$\chi^2=37.0$ , $df=3$ , $p<.05$		

A group of 24 cadets said the budget should be "increased." Only 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) thought so.

Only 4 military students (8.3 percent) said the budget ought to be "reduced," while 29 journalism students selected this response.

One military student did not answer the question.

## 22. U.S. Vietnam Involvement

This question asked students to voice their opinions on whether or not U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war had

been a "mistake." Table 22 shows that military students were about evenly divided on this issue, while an 84.8 percent majority of journalism respondents felt that U.S. involvement had been a mistake. A Chi Square test indicated there was a statistically significant difference. The table also indicates students' similar views to Question 10, which found that, in general, military students are more supportive of government actions than are journalism students.

Written opinions from military students varied. One student stated:

(Vietnam) was not a mistake, but the way we fought it was. The U.S. should never fight a war defensively, but always on the offense. A recent mistake like the one in Vietnam, was the Marines in Beirut.

Another felt that the American experience in Vietnam had been one wrong on top of another from the war's beginning. He explained:

Wishy-washy decision making -- limited war -- led to our worst military effort in history. I don't think Vietnam was a vital interest, so why did we go to war?

The statistical break down shows that 20 cadets, or 41.7 percent, stated that U.S. involvement had been a mistake. Thirty-nine journalism students indicated this response.

TABLE 22

## Attitude on Vietnam Involvement

It has been just more than a decade since the United States ended its involvement in the Vietnam war. In your view, was U.S. involvement there a mistake?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
20 (41.7%)	39 (84.8%)	yes
24 (50.0%)	7 (15.2%)	no
4 (8.3%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$\chi^2=19.41, df=2, p<.05$$

Half of the cadet respondents (24 students) did not feel U.S. involvement in Vietnam was a mistake, as opposed to 7 journalism students (15.2 percent).

Four military students did not answer the question.

## 23. Opinion on the Draft

This question was designed to find the position students held toward a military draft, with two sub-categories given. One was for men, the other for women. Military students were divided on whether men should be drafted, but a majority opposed the draft for women.

TABLE 23

## Opinion of the Draft

What is your opinion on a military draft for:

## Men?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
26 (54.2%)	12 (26.1%)	yes
21 (43.8%)	32 (69.6%)	no
1 (2.1%)	2 (4.3%)	no response

$$\chi^2=7.74, df=2, p<.05$$

## Women?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
15 (31.3%)	9 (19.6%)	yes
32 (66.7%)	35 (76.1%)	no
1 (2.1%)	2 (4.3%)	no response

$$\chi^2=1.93, df=2, p>.05$$

A majority of journalism students opposed the draft for both men and women. Chi Square tests on each category revealed there was a statistically significant difference on

the issue of men being drafted. There was no significant difference on the issue of women and the draft.

This question's findings may also show that because the military students generally see a need for increased funding and arms build up, many in their group also perceive the need for more men to join the military. Journalism students reflect the opposite view, which seems consistent with earlier findings.

#### **Men**

Table 23 shows that twenty-six cadets (54.2 percent) supported a draft for men. Twelve journalism students, or 26.1 percent, supported this idea.

Twenty-one cadets, or 43.8 percent, did not support the draft. In the journalism group, 69.6 percent (32 students) said they did not support the draft for men.

One military student and two journalism students did not answer the question.

#### **Women**

Table 23 also shows that fifteen cadets (31.3 percent) supported the idea of women being drafted, while 9 journalism students (19.6 percent) felt similarly.

Thirty-two military students, a 66.7 percent majority, did not support women being drafted, while in the journalism group, 76.1 percent (35 students) were against such a move.

---

**TABLE 24**

**Rank Order of Problems Facing the Nation**

Examining the problems the United States faces today as listed below, how would you rate each? (Use a scale of 1 through 8, with 1 equaling the most important problem and 8 equaling the least important problem).

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>
1. keeping the peace	1. keeping the peace
2. national budget deficit	2. national budget deficit
3. education policy	3. education policy
4. crime	4. racial inequality
5. high cost of living	5. crime
6. racial inequality	6. high cost of living
7. immigration policy	7. labor union turmoil
8. labor union turmoil	8. immigration

\* See Tables 24a through 24h for figures and percentages.

Spearman's Test: Rrank=.905,  $p < .001$

---

**24. Rank Ordering U.S. Problems**

This question sought student perspective on many of the problems the United States faces. Table 24 shows that leading the list among both groups of students was the



problem of "keeping the peace." Students in both groups indicated they were also quite concerned about the "national budget deficit."

Spearman's Test showed that there was a highly significant correlation in the two group's rankings of problems facing the nation. We find that, even with the division in views on many other topics, the students of both groups hold quite similar views of what the nation's problems are.

#### **Keeping the Peace**

Twenty-four military students (50.0 percent) and 22 journalism students (47.8 percent) rated this as the top problem. A Chi Square test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in the two groups.

Six cadets (12.5 percent) and 7 journalism students (15.2 percent) rated it second.

Seven cadets and 7 journalism students (14.6 and 15.2 percent, respectively) rated it third.

Three cadets and 3 journalism students (6.3 and 6.5 percent, respectively) rated it the fourth most important.

Two cadets (4.2 percent) and 4 journalism students rated it fifth.

Two from each group (4.2 and 4.3 percent, respectively) rated it sixth.

TABLE 24a

## Keeping the Peace

How would you rate the problem of keeping the peace?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
24 (50.0%)	22 (47.8%)	greatest problem
6 (12.5%)	7 (15.2%)	second greatest problem
7 (14.6%)	7 (15.2%)	third greatest problem
3 (6.3%)	3 (6.5%)	fourth greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	4 (8.7%)	fifth greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	2 (4.3%)	sixth greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	1 (2.2%)	seventh greatest problem
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	least problem
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	did not answer
$\chi^2=3.12, df=7, p>.05$		

Two military students and one journalism student rated it seventh. None rated it last.

Two military students did not answer the question.

## High Cost of Living

One student from each group rated this the number one

problem. A Chi Square test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference.

Five cadets (10.4 percent) and 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) rated it second.

Eight cadets (16.7 percent) and 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) rated it third.

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**TABLE 24b**

**High Cost of Living**

How would you rate the problem of the high cost of living?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	greatest problem
5 (10.4%)	4 (8.7%)	second greatest problem
8 (16.7%)	5 (10.9%)	third greatest problem
10 (20.8%)	8 (17.4%)	fourth greatest problem
9 (18.8%)	8 (17.4%)	fifth greatest problem
5 (10.4%)	7 (15.2%)	sixth greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	9 (19.6%)	seventh greatest problem
6 (12.5%)	4 (8.7%)	least problem
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	did not answer

$$\chi^2=8.23, df=8, p>.05$$


---

Ten cadets, or 20.8 percent, and 8 journalism students (17.4 percent) rated it as the fourth most important problem.

Nine military students (18.8 percent) and 8 journalism students, or 17.4 percent, rated it fifth.

Five cadets (10.4 percent) and 7 journalism students (15.2 percent) rated it sixth.

Two military students (4.2 percent) and 9 journalism students (19.6) rated it seventh.

Six military students (12.5) and 4 journalism students, or 8.7 percent, rated it last. Two military students did not answer the question.

#### **National Budget Deficit**

Ten military students (20.8 percent) and 14 journalism students, or 30.4 percent, indicated this was the top problem facing the United States. A Chi Square test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference.

Thirteen cadets (27.1 percent) and 9 journalism students (19.6 percent) rated it the second most serious problem.

Nine cadets (18.8 percent) and 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) rated it third.

TABLE 24c

## National Budget Deficit

How would you rate the problem of the national budget deficit?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
10 (20.8%)	14 (30.4%)	greatest problem
13 (27.1%)	9 (19.6%)	second greatest problem
9 (18.8%)	4 (8.7%)	third greatest problem
7 (14.6%)	5 (10.9%)	fourth greatest problem
4 (8.3%)	4 (8.7%)	fifth greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	4 (8.7%)	sixth greatest problem
1 (2.1%)	2 (4.3%)	seventh greatest problem
0 (0.0%)	4 (8.7%)	least problem

$$\chi^2=10.61, df=8, p>.05$$

Seven cadets (14.6 percent) and 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) rated it the fourth most important problem.

Four students from each group (8.3 and 8.7 percent, respectively) rated the deficit fifth.

Two from the military group (4.2 percent) and 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) rated it sixth.

One cadet and two journalism students (4.3 percent) rated it seventh.

No military student rated it last. Four journalism students (8.7 percent) did. Two military students did not answer the question.

### **Education Policy**

The Chi Square test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference.

Five cadets, or 10.4 percent, and 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) rated education policy at the top of the list.

Twelve cadets (25 percent) ranked it second. Ten journalism students (21.7 percent) selected that response.

Nine cadets (18.8 percent) and 13 journalism students (28.3 percent) selected education policy as the third most serious problem.

Five from each group (10.4 and 10.9 percent, respectively) rated it the fourth most important problem.

Six military students (12.5 percent) rated it fifth. Six journalism students (13 percent) also rated it fifth.

Two cadets (4.2 percent) and five journalism students (10.9 percent) rated it sixth.

TABLE 24d

## National Education Policy

How would you rate the problem of national education policy?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
5 (10.4%)	3 (6.5%)	greatest problem
12 (25.0%)	10 (21.7%)	second greatest problem
9 (18.8%)	13 (28.3%)	third greatest problem
5 (10.4%)	5 (10.9%)	fourth greatest problem
6 (12.5%)	6 (13.0%)	fifth greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	5 (10.9%)	sixth greatest problem
5 (10.4%)	4 (8.7%)	seventh greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	least problem
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	did not answer

$$\chi^2=6.77, df=8, p>.05$$

Five military students, or 10.4 percent, and four journalism students (8.7 percent) rated it seventh.

Two cadets (4.2 percent) rated it last, while no journalism student did so.

Two military students did not answer the question.

### Crime

A Chi Square test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference.

Five military students (10.4 percent) rated crime the top problem, while 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) selected this response.

---

**TABLE 24e**

### Crime

How would you rate the problem of crime?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
5 (10.4%)	3 (6.5%)	greatest problem
9 (18.8%)	4 (8.7%)	second greatest problem
7 (14.6%)	6 (13.0%)	third greatest problem
8 (16.7%)	15 (32.6%)	fourth greatest problem
8 (16.7%)	11 (23.9%)	fifth greatest problem
5 (10.4%)	7 (15.2%)	sixth greatest problem
4 (8.3%)	0 (0.0%)	seventh greatest problem
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	least problem
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	did not answer

$$x^2=11.40, df=7, p>.05$$


---



Nine cadets (18.8 percent) and 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) rated it second.

Seven cadets (14.6 percent) and 6 journalism students (13 percent) named crime the third greatest problem.

Eight cadets (16.7 percent) and 15 journalism students (32.6 percent) rated it the fourth most important problem.

Eight more cadets and 11 journalism students (23.9 percent) rated it fifth.

Five in the military group (10.4 percent) and 7 journalism students (15.2 percent) rated it sixth.

Four military students (8.3 percent) rated it seventh. No journalism student chose to rate the problem seventh. None rated it last.

Two military students did not answer the question.

#### **Labor Union Turmoil**

No military or journalism students rated this either the top or second rated problem. A Chi Square test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference.

One cadet and 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) rated union turmoil as the third most important problem.

Two cadets (4.2 percent) and 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) rated it fourth.

TABLE 24f

## Labor Union Turmoil

How would you rate the problem of labor union turmoil?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	first greatest problem
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	second greatest problem
1 (2.1%)	3 (6.5%)	third greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	3 (6.5%)	fourth greatest problem
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	fifth greatest problem
6 (12.5%)	5 (10.9%)	sixth greatest problem
10 (20.8%)	19 (41.3%)	seventh greatest problem
26 (54.2%)	16 (34.8%)	least problem
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	did not answer

$$\chi^2=9.43, df=6, p>.05$$

One cadet and no journalism students rated it fifth.

Six cadets (12.5 percent) and 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) rated it the sixth most important problem.

Ten cadets (20.8 percent) and 19 journalism students (41.3 percent) rated it seventh.

Twenty-six cadets, or 54.2 percent, rated it last.

Sixteen journalism students (34.8 percent) also rated it the least important problem.

Two military students did not answer the question.

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**TABLE 24g**

**Racial Inequality**

How would you rate the problem of racial inequality?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
0 (0.0%)	3 (6.5%)	first greatest problem
1 (2.1%)	11 (23.9%)	second greatest problem
3 (6.3%)	7 (15.2%)	third greatest problem
7 (14.6%)	5 (10.9%)	fourth greatest problem
9 (18.8%)	10 (21.7%)	fifth greatest problem
12 (25.0%)	4 (8.7%)	sixth greatest problem
9 (18.8%)	4 (8.7%)	seventh greatest problem
5 (10.4%)	2 (4.3%)	least problem
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	did not answer

$$x^2=22.50, df=8, p<.05$$


---

**Racial Inequality**

The Chi Square test conducted showed that there was a

statistically significant difference. No military students rated racial inequality the top problem. Three journalism students (6.5 percent) did.

One cadets and 11 journalism students (23.9 percent) rated it the second greatest problem.

Three cadets (6.3 percent) and 7 journalism students (15.2 percent) rated it third.

Seven cadets (14.6 percent) and 5 journalism students (10.9 percent) rated it the fourth most important problem.

Nine military students (18.8 percent) saw it as the fifth most serious problem. Ten journalism students, or 21.7 percent, rated it fifth.

Twelve cadets (25 percent) rated it sixth. Four journalism students (8.7 percent) did also.

Nine military students (18.8 percent) and four journalism students (8.7 percent) rated it seventh.

Five cadets (10.4 percent) and 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) rated it last. Two military students did not answer the question.

#### **Immigration Policy**

A Chi Square test showed that there was not a statistically significant difference.

One student in each group ranked immigration as the nation's number one problem.

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**TABLE 24h**

**Immigration Policy**

How would you rate the problem of immigration policy?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	first greatest problem
0 (0.0%)	1 (2.2%)	second greatest problem
2 (4.2%)	2 (4.3%)	third greatest problem
3 (6.3%)	2 (4.3%)	fourth greatest problem
8 (16.7%)	4 (8.7%)	fifth greatest problem
11 (22.9%)	11 (23.9%)	sixth greatest problem
14 (29.2%)	7 (15.2%)	seventh greatest problem
7 (14.6%)	18 (39.1%)	least problem
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	did not answer

$$\chi^2=11.67, df=8, p>.05$$


---

No cadet ranked it second. One journalism student did.

Two cadets (4.2 percent) and 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) rated it third.

Three cadets (6.3 percent) and 2 journalism students indicated immigration policy is the fourth most important problem.

Eight cadets (16.7 percent) and 4 journalism students rated it the fifth most important problem.

Eleven students in each group (22.9 and 23.9 percent, respectively) rated it sixth.

Fourteen military students (29.2 percent) rated it seventh. Seven journalism students (15.2 percent) answered similarly.

Seven cadets (14.6 percent) and 18 journalism students (39.1 percent) rated it last. Two military students did not answer the question.

## **25. Media Performance**

This question sought attitudes from students concerning how well the U.S. news media perform in terms of the quantity and the quality of news they provide. Here again we find the trend that military students rate the media lower than the journalism students do.

A military student wrote that he viewed the news media's credibility as corrupted by economic realities they face. He wrote:

The U.S. media is (sic) governed by the need to make money, therefore they need to present the news in a fashion that will attract viewers, readers, or listeners. This gives rise to pretty anchors with glib quips instead of in-depth news.

Another cadet argued that media which take editorial stances have impacted his views toward media credibility:

The news media should report the news. If there is no news the media should not report non-news. I don't want the media making moral judgments for me. They can report the facts and I'll form my own opinions. The editorial has no place as the featured article on page one. I believe the media has (sic) earned the public's mistrust through biased reporting.

Table 25 shows that military students viewed both quantity and quality of news less favorably than journalism students. The Chi Square tests on both sub-categories indicated that significant statistical differences are apparent in each.

#### **The Quantity of News**

Table 25 shows that six cadets (12.5 percent) said that the news media perform "exceptionally well" in terms of news quantity, while 14 journalism respondents (30.4 percent) thought so.

Nineteen military students (39.6 percent) said the news media performed "pretty well." Twenty-five journalism students ( 54.3 percent) selected this answer.

TABLE 25

## News Media News Quality and Quantity

How well do you think the United States news media do their job of delivering news?

In terms of quantity of news provided:

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
6 (12.5%)	14 (30.4%)	exceptionally well
19 (39.6%)	25 (54.3%)	pretty well
17 (35.4%)	5 (10.9%)	okay
5 (10.4%)	2 (4.3%)	somewhat poorly
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	very poorly
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$\chi^2=12.81, df=4, p<.05$$

In terms of quality of news provided:

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	8 (17.4%)	exceptionally well
17 (35.4%)	19 (41.3%)	pretty well
17 (35.4%)	16 (34.8%)	okay
11 (22.9%)	3 (6.5%)	somewhat poorly
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	very poorly
1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$\chi^2=12.12, df=5, p<.05$$



Seventeen cadets (35.4 percent) thought news quantity was "okay," while only 5 journalism students, or 10.9 percent, thought so.

Five cadets (10.4 percent) and 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) said the media perform "somewhat poorly."

No students said the quantity was "very" poor, and one military student did not answer.

#### **The Quality of News**

Table 25 also shows that only 1 military student thought the media provided news "exceptionally well." Eight journalism students (17.4 percent) thought this was the case.

Seventeen cadets (35.4 percent) viewed the coverage as "pretty well" done. Nineteen journalism students (41.3 percent) selected this response.

Seventeen cadets also said the quality was "okay," while 16 journalism students, or 34.8 percent, thought so.

Eleven military students (22.9 percent) thought the quality of news to be "somewhat poorly" provided, while only 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) answered similarly.

Only one military student thought the media performed "very poorly" in the quality of news they provided.

One military student did not answer the question.

## 26. Media Credibility

This filter question again sought responses on how the students viewed various media in terms of their credibility (note Question 2 on "Trust in Media" in which results, for all practical purposes were identical). Newspapers were rated highest in both groups of students. Military students viewed television and radio as tied for least credible, while many journalism students thought radio their least credible news medium.

---

**TABLE 26**

### News Media Credibility

If you were to rate the credibility of the news media listed below, which would be the most credible and which the least credible?

#### Rank Order of Media\*

Military	Journalism
1. newspapers	1. newspapers
2. magazines	2. magazines
3. radio	3. radio, television*
4. television	

\* Radio and television were tied for third in the journalism category. See individual tables for statistical data.

Spearman's Test:  $R_{rank} = .916$ ,  $p < .001$

---

Spearman's Test showed almost perfect correlation. Just as in the earlier findings from Question 2, it is important to note that, although the two groups rank the media they trust in a similar fashion, the rank-order is relative. Military students, in general, trust the media much less than the journalism students do.

---

**TABLE 26a**

**Newspapers**

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
9 (18.8%)	24 (52.2%)	very credible
27 (56.3%)	19 (41.3%)	somewhat credible
6 (12.5%)	1 (2.2%)	not so credible
4 (8.3%)	2 (4.3%)	rarely credible
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	no credibility
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$x^2=14.41, df=4, p<.05$$


---

**Newspapers**

A Chi Square test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference. Table 26a showed that

9 military students (18.8 percent) indicated that they considered newspapers to be a "very credible" news source. Twenty-four journalism students (52.2 percent) indicated they trusted newspapers most.

Twenty-seven cadets (56.3 percent) and 19 journalism students (41.3 percent) stated that newspapers were "somewhat credible."

Six cadets (12.5 percent) and one journalism student viewed newspapers as "not so credible."

Four military students (8.3 percent) and 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) viewed newspapers as "rarely credible."

Two of the military students did not answer this question.

### **Radio**

The Chi Square test indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference. Table 26b shows that 4 cadets (8.3 percent) and 8 journalism students (17.4 percent) said that radio was a "very credible" medium.

Both groups contained twenty-two students (45.8 and 47.8 percent, respectively) who said radio was "somewhat credible."

Seventeen cadets (35.4 percent) and 13 journalism students (28.3 percent) said that radio was "not so credible."

---

**TABLE 26b**

Radio

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
4 (8.3%)	8 (17.4%)	very credible
22 (45.8%)	22 (47.8%)	somewhat credible
17 (35.4%)	13 (28.3%)	not so credible
3 (6.3%)	3 (6.5%)	rarely credible
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	no credibility
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$\chi^2=3.83, df=4, p>.05$$


---

Three in each group (6.3 and 6.5 percent, respectively) indicated they felt radio was "rarely credible."

No students rated radio as having "no credibility," although two military students did not answer this question.

**Magazines**

The Chi Square test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference. Table 26c shows that

only 2 cadets (4.2 percent) viewed magazines as a "very credible" news source, while 13 journalism students, or 28.3 percent, did.

Figures indicated that 54.2 percent of military students (26 cadets) felt that magazines were "somewhat credible," while 27 journalism students (58.7 percent) thought similarly.

---

**TABLE 26c**

**Magazines**

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
2 (4.2%)	13 (28.3%)	very credible
26 (54.2%)	27 (58.7%)	somewhat credible
16 (33.3%)	4 (8.7%)	not so credible
2 (4.2%)	2 (4.3%)	rarely credible
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	no credibility
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$x^2=17.25, df=4, p<.05$$


---

Sixteen cadets (33.3 percent) and only 4 journalism students (8.7 percent) indicated they felt magazines to be "not so credible."

Two students from each group (4.2 and 4.3 percent, respectively) felt the magazines to be "rarely credible."

None said that magazines had no credibility. Two military students did not answer the question.

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**TABLE 26d**

**Television**

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
4 (8.3%)	7 (15.2%)	very credible
14 (29.2%)	26 (56.5%)	somewhat credible
16 (33.3%)	9 (19.6%)	not so credible
11 (22.9%)	3 (6.5%)	rarely credible
1 (2.1%)	1 (2.2%)	no credibility
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$x^2=12.91, df=5, p<.05$$


---

**Television**

The Chi Square test conducted indicated that there was a statistically significant degree of difference. Table 26d shows that 4 cadets (8.3 percent) and 7 journalism students (15.2 percent) found television to be "very credible."

Fourteen military students (29.2 percent) thought

television to be "somewhat credible." Twenty-six journalism students, or 56.5 percent, felt similarly.

Sixteen cadets (33.3 percent) and 9 journalism students (19.6 percent) felt television to be "not so credible."

Eleven cadets (22.9 percent) and 3 journalism students (6.5 percent) viewed television as "rarely credible."

One student in each group labeled television as having "no credibility." Two military students provided no answer.

#### **27. Trust Factor**

This question sought student opinion on how much they trusted members in the military and journalism professions. Military students were placed in an interview situation and asked how much they would trust the reporter-interviewer they would encounter.

Journalism students were placed in the same situation, but asked how much they would trust the military officer they would encounter as their interview subject.

Table 27 showed that military students proved to be more distrusting of journalists, than journalism students were of the military, reflecting the earlier trends. However, a Chi Square test indicated that the difference was not statistically significant. Many journalism students distrust the military, too.



Only one military student stated that the reporter encountered would be "trusted fully." Three journalism students (6.5 percent) said they could fully trust the officer.

---

TABLE 27

Trust Factor

Military student question:

Let's say you have received your commission and you recently arrived at your first base. Your commander informs you that you have been chosen to do an interview with a local reporter concerning a project you've directed. How much will you likely trust the reporter you will encounter?

Journalism student question:

Let's say you have graduated and have just arrived at your first reporting job. Your boss informs you that you have been chosen to do an interview at a local military base with an officer who is directing a project there. How much will you likely trust the military officer you will encounter?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
1 (2.1%)	3 (6.5%)	trust fully
21 (43.8%)	27 (58.7%)	trust somewhat
21 (43.8%)	14 (30.4%)	distrust somewhat
3 (6.3%)	2 (4.3%)	totally distrust
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$\chi^2=5.31, df=4, p>.05$$


---

Twenty-one cadets (43.8 percent) and 27 journalism students (58.7 percent) stated they would "trust somewhat" the person they encountered.

Twenty-one cadets also stated they would "distrust somewhat" the reporter they encountered. Fourteen journalism students (30.4 percent) selected this choice.

Only 3 cadets (6.3 percent) and 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) said they would "totally distrust" the person they encountered.

#### **28. Publishing or Airing Classified Information**

This question asked students whether or not they think that leaked "classified information" published or aired by the press was generally the right or wrong thing to do.

The Chi Square test reveals there was a highly significant difference on this question. Table 28 reveals that the military students doubted such material should be published or aired, although 35.4 percent said it was "all right in some cases." A majority of journalism students felt it was "all right" to publish or air the information.

Only one military student said it was "perfectly all right" to leak classified information. Nine journalism students (19.6 percent) answered it was "perfectly all right."

Seventeen cadets (35.4 percent) thought it was "all right in some cases" to publish or air that information. In the journalism group, a 60.9 percent majority (28 students) believed it was "all right in some cases."

---

**TABLE 28**

**Classified Information**

**Military student question:**

The news media sometimes have "classified" information leaked to them from government sources for reasons ranging from political infighting to concern about the national welfare. Do you generally think that when the media publish or air that information they are right or wrong in doing so?

**Journalism student question:**

Governments sometimes leak "classified" information to reporters for reasons ranging from political infighting to concern about the national welfare. Do you generally think that publishing or airing that kind of information is the right or wrong thing to do?

<u><b>Military</b></u>	<u><b>Journalism</b></u>	
1 (2.1%)	9 (19.6%)	perfectly all right
17 (35.4%)	28 (60.9%)	all right in some cases
12 (25.0%)	9 (19.6%)	probably not all right
16 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)	absolutely not all right
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$\chi^2=27.49, df=4, p<.05$$


---

Twelve military students (25 percent) and 9 journalism students (19.6 percent) said it was "probably not all right."

Sixteen military students, or 33.3 percent, said it was "absolutely not all right" to air or publish that information.

Two military students did not answer the question.

### **29. Knowledge About Respective Roles**

This question was designed to test the perception of each group of students for one another's prospective roles in society. Military students were asked to give a rating on their knowledge of journalists in American life. Journalism students were asked to rate their knowledge of the military in American life.

Military students rated themselves slightly more knowledgeable about the roles of the news media than the journalism students did for the military's role. The military students' views -- that they understand the media already -- may prove a difficulty for educators to overcome.

A Chi Square test revealed there was not a statistically significant difference in the way the two groups viewed their knowledge of one another.

TABLE 29

## Knowledge About Respective Roles

Military student question:

How would you rate the quality of your knowledge about the role of the news media in American life?

Journalism student question:

How would you rate the quality of your knowledge about the role of the military in American life?

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
4 (8.3%)	2 (4.3%)	excellent
25 (52.1%)	16 (34.8%)	good
14 (29.2%)	22 (47.8%)	fair
3 (6.3%)	5 (10.9%)	poor
0 (0.0%)	1 (2.2%)	very poor
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0)	no response

$$\chi^2=7.88, df=5, p>.05$$

Four cadets, or 8.3 percent, stated that their knowledge was "excellent," while 2 journalism students (4.3 percent) rated their knowledge about the military "excellent."

In the military group, 25 cadets (52.1 percent) said

they had "good" knowledge of the role of the press. Sixteen journalism students (34.8 percent) said they had "good" knowledge about the role of the military.

Fourteen cadets (29.2 percent) indicated they had "fair" knowledge of the media's role. Twenty-two journalism students (47.8 percent) chose this response.

Three cadets (6.3 percent) said they had "poor knowledge" about the media. Five journalism students, or 10.9 percent, said they had "poor knowledge" about the military.

No military student selected the "very poor" category, but one journalism student did.

Two military students did not answer the question.

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**TABLE 30**

Sex Variable

<u>Military</u>	<u>Journalism</u>	
45 (93.8%)	14 (30.4%)	male
1 (2.1%)	32 (69.6%)	female
2 (4.2%)	0 (0.0%)	no response

$$\chi^2=47.39, df=2, p>.05$$


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### 30. Sex Variable

This question concerned the sex variable. Two military students, unfortunately, did not complete the question, as Table 30 shows. There were 45 male cadets and one female cadet. Fourteen of the journalism respondents were males (30.4 percent) and 32 females (69.6 percent).

One may wonder how the data would have differed if more women respondents had been a part of the military group. Some 10 percent of the military work force is now women.<sup>5</sup> The 69.9 percent total for women in the journalism group is surprisingly reflective of the latest studies from the University of Maryland that showed nationally, 60 percent of students in journalism schools are now women.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>"Women In Combat? Withdrawing Them In a Crisis Could Hamper Readiness," Newsweek, 11 November 1985, p. 36. There are now more than 200,000 women in the military.

<sup>6</sup>"The New Majority? Among Journalism Students, It's Women," The Wall Street Journal, 5 November 1985, p. 1. At Maryland, exactly 69 percent of the journalism students are women.

## Chapter Seven

### CONCLUSIONS

The uniformed services of a democracy must be a part of, not apart from, their society. . . . The press must respect the need for military security because that is right. The military must respect the need of the people to know what (it) is doing -- and not doing -- because that is right . . . . And no institution must seek to bar another from the constitutional playing field -- or the entire game of freedom will end. -- Jerry W. Friedheim<sup>1</sup>

#### Historical Implications and A Future Concern

The review of the historical military-media relationship offered here has shown that, although cooperation and trust between the two disciplines have existed for the most part, the relationship has had more than its share of conflict and controversy. A common theme developed throughout the historical review of the military-media relationship, which will also require much more study in regard to how it will affect the future of the relationship. It is the changing nature of warfare itself. In the nuclear age, when war on a global scale could mean an end to all civilization, strategic planners bank on the

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<sup>1</sup>Jerry W. Friedheim, "Learning From The Blockade," Presstime, December 1983, p. 30. Freidheim, is vice president and general manager of the American Newspaper Publishers Association and a former Pentagon spokesman.



insanity of such an action as the prime reason it will not happen. With the nuclear stand-off in place, it may mean that typical military conflicts in which the United States may become involved in will be more on the scale of the Grenada battle. In fact, the growing scourge of terrorism (the Beirut bombing of the U.S. Marine peacekeeping force, for instance) may force retaliatory moves in the form of small-scale military actions. Those kinds of actions -- if they do occur -- are likely to be filled with controversy at home. They will not be clear-cut battles in the eyes of Americans such as the great wars were.

An argument can even be made that the wars in Korea and Vietnam were just the beginning of wars that will be fought without the full support of the American people. With the media serving their rightful role as reporters of facts, all sides of these issues must be heard. Thus, in future conflicts, the government and military may well perceive the press to be against their efforts. Will stiffer censorship of the media become the reality as a result? Will the American people, in violation of the tenets laid down in their Constitution, become uninformed and unrepresented by the press? These are questions that merit further study.

### Review of the Questionnaire

In the study conducted here, however, the findings of the questionnaire administered to future military officers and journalists may well indicate that the future military-media relationship will not be without its share of traditional problems, either. The divide the Twentieth Task Force and others have described does appear to exist. Indeed, figures indicating that 58 percent of the journalism respondents have either "little trust" (47.8 percent) or "no trust at all" (10.9 percent) in the military do not bode well for the future relationship.

Ratings made by both military and media students also showed that in comparison to the trust they place in other American institutions, they rate one another's disciplines near the bottom of their "credibility" lists.

It may also alarm the journalism community to know that a majority of the cadets -- some 85 percent -- strongly believe that censorship of the media in wartime is either "absolutely" correct (45.8 percent) or "occasionally" correct (39.6 percent). Some 85 percent of cadets also said that information on "a pending invasion" -- a Grenada-like circumstance -- should "absolutely" be withheld from the press. More than 83 percent of the cadets said that even "an invasion taking place" should

"absolutely" be withheld. Furthermore, 39 percent of the cadets said that even "an invasion completed" is information that should be kept from the news media for reasons of "national security."

Equally alarming to journalists would be the cadets' views that the media ought to accompany the military to its battles as a "team player." Nearly half of the cadets questioned said that the media should either "always support the military as a team player" (8.3 percent) or "usually support the military as a team player" (37.5 percent).

What these figures indicate is that even with the tremendous furor over the events of the Grenada (and subsequent actions by the Pentagon to change its policy toward the press), a lack of understanding of the media role in society may well continue to plague the military ranks if nothing is done to alter the attitudes these cadets now hold.

Figures also seem to indicate that the cadets do not have as thorough a grasp of the historical military-media relationship as perhaps they should. Grenada -- with its press-media controversy -- was rated a less difficult period for the military-media relationship than Vietnam was

by the cadets. Similarly, the statistical figures support the contention that the Vietnam war continues to influence attitudes of the military toward the news media. Majorities in both groups of students said, for instance, that Vietnam's influence was the reason U.S. decision-makers chose to bar the media from Grenada.

The questionnaire's findings also indicate that there is a great need for both realms -- journalism and military -- to recognize and accept that the very nature of their two disciplines will make it likely that no complete agreement will ever be reached between the two. For one thing, the students questioned certainly believe that the relationship's difficulties will never be completely resolved. Sixty-two percent of cadets and 89 percent of journalism students said as much. And some 40 percent of cadets and slightly more than 69 percent said they believe that the American public is likely to be "less than satisfactorily" served by the military-media relationship in the event of a future U.S. war.

But this is not to say that there are not important steps that can and should be taken. The Sidle Panel recommendations, and those of the Twentieth Century Task Force, have served as good beginnings.

### General Sidle's Views of Recent Efforts

Retired Maj. Gen. Winant Sidle, said he is "basically pleased" with the reaction he has seen to the recommendations of his commission on military-media relations. "I think (DoD) is approaching the process intelligently," Sidle said. "They have already made great strides in the area of media 'pool' planning."<sup>2</sup>

But General Sidle said that he views the Pentagon effort as an evolutionary process in which "there is still much to be done." He noted that the role of new technology -- especially in the television medium -- has still not been adequately addressed.

DoD really has to get on this quickly. Instantaneous television almost demands that the military have escort officers accompanying reporters. And, I know the media react very badly to that idea. I don't know for sure whether or not they understand why the military sees it as a problem. But it is urgent that the two sides start talking about this before something else happens. There needs to be pre-planning on how it's going to be handled.<sup>3</sup>

General Sidle said he has also personally urged new Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Robert

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<sup>2</sup>General Sidle made these remarks in a telephone interview with the author on November 14, 1985. More on the pooling test's success and failure appears on pp. 269-70.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Sims to arrange for top military leaders and journalism executives to meet for the "get-acquainted sessions" his panel had recommended. "So far, that effort has fallen through the cracks," General Sidle said. "I don't think (former OASD/PA chief) Mike Burch wanted to invest the time to do it. I don't know if Bob Sims (currently OASD/PA chief) has even had time yet to follow through on it." The general said he has repeatedly urged for such top level meetings to take place. "They cannot do anything but promote better understanding. . . understanding that has to start at the top." He noted that he had made his views known to out-going Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. John Vessey, Jr. Specifically, he and Vessey discussed the need for the military to act on the panel's recommendations for education.

General Vessey agreed with me that the way to do it is to start at the top and work down. That's why we've seen programs instituted at the war colleges. We're now seeing some efforts at levels that include majors and even some captains. But I believe the effort is going much too slowly. There is a need to make it a mandatory part of training.<sup>4</sup>

Maj. Fred Lash, who represented the U.S. Marines Corps on the Sidle Panel and now serves in OASD/PA, said he also believes that the military's reaction to the Sidle panel

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

recommendations have been positive. On the educational front, Major Lash noted that he and others within OASD/PA have been regularly participating in media-military relations seminars and conferences. They have taken place at the Army War College, Naval War College, the Air Command and Staff College, and the Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School and Command and Staff College, among other schools, he said. The interchange between the media and military "has been intense at times," Major Lash noted. "But it is an excellent sounding board for ideas to be heard. It's been a good chance for both sides to vent their spleens."<sup>5</sup>

Major Lash admitted, however, that the recommendations of the Sidle panel for improved planning on logistics and transportation have been extremely difficult for the military to address. He said:

The nature of these problems tends to make it necessary for decisions to be made separately in each individual case. It's hard to get a handle on. The fact of the matter is that you just don't know in advance what will be available until whatever it is happens.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Major Lash made these comments in a telephone interview with the author November 12, 1985.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

### Pentagon Pool Tests

The recent exercises conducted by the Pentagon and the media of the emergency pools, another recommendation of the Sidle Panel, have begun in earnest but with mixed results. The first exercise was widely proclaimed a failure, while the second one was viewed as a success. Both marked important progress in the increased military-media interaction that is needed, General Sidle said.<sup>7</sup>

The first test included various Washington, D.C.-based reporters called together to accompany the military to an exercise held in Honduras in April. The entire operation collapsed in failure after word of the pool's formation leaked even before the pool left the Washington, D.C., area. According to journalist Kim Willenson, things did not improve when the reporters arrived in Honduras:

Just about everything that could go wrong, did -- starting with the Pentagon's decision to plan the maneuver without consulting anyone who had ever actually covered a war. What turned into a high-spirited romp might well have ended in disaster if this group of middle-aged and (speaking for myself, at least) out-of-shape office workers had wound up on a real battlefield.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Telephone conversation.

<sup>8</sup>"Frolic in the Honduras: The Pentagon Press Poll SNAFU," Kim Willenson, Washington Journalism Review, July 1985, p. 17. Willenson is a national security correspondent for Newsweek.



Defense Department officials at the time had criticized the media for having been the cause of the leak, but later conceded that both sides were probably at fault for the disclosure. Miscommunication was blamed.<sup>9</sup>

At the Honduran exercise, the military's communications facilities "(didn't) work worth a damn," according to Willenson, and commanders refused to allow priority to press messages as in the Korean war. Reporters' dispatches, in some cases, reached editors two days after they had been written.<sup>10</sup>

The next try at forming a pool and testing the system came in mid-September. That test was as smooth as the Honduran test was rough. It included representatives of The Associated Press, United Press International, Newsday, the Los Angeles Times, Newhouse News Service, Time, Mutual Radio, and the Cable News Network. Media members, after only a few hours' notice, ". . . were zooming through the night in Blackhawk assault helicopters flying at treetop level into. . . maneuvers at Fort Campbell, (Kentucky)."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>"Test Run of Combat Media Pool Goes Smoothly," David Wood, Editor and Publisher, 28 September 1985, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup>"Frolic," Willenson, p. 18.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

Col. Dante A. Camia, OASD/IA officer in charge of the exercise, was optimistic in his evaluation of the effort. He said:

What's needed for this type of thing is a spirit of understanding and cooperation on both sides that gets us to where we want to go without a lot of weeping and gnashing of teeth. And that's what has happened. I think we've cracked the nut.<sup>12</sup>

Adequate logistical planning had ensured that pool reports would be readied quickly by "the 101st Airborne Division's high-speed communications link with the Joint Chiefs' operations room in the Pentagon, where they would be distributed early that evening." Pentagon officials are still analyzing this test to review whether the possibility existed that "hostile intelligence" could have found out about it in advance. Chief Defense Department spokesman Sims has also said he is aware that actual field conditions could well have been more rigorous for reporters than the Fort Campbell test had been. He noted future pool exercises -- possibly four per year -- will be more strenuous and are likely to include more realistic scenarios.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid. The media "filing center" at Fort Campbell was air conditioned and furnished with electric typewriters and commercial telephone lines. A ready supply of "Kool Aid" was also on hand, Willenson wrote -- creature comforts that are not exactly like typical wartime field conditions.

General Sidle said he is quite happy that the second test went better than the first, but added that even after the first exercise had been proclaimed a "failure," he had received telephone calls from news media executives who told him that they still considered it "a good start." General Sidle said, "They felt a lot had been learned from it and that there were weaknesses on both sides that needed to be overcome."<sup>14</sup>

#### **Educational Efforts**

While the tests of the Pentagon media pools have served to reassure many that if future military actions do occur, both press and military will be better prepared and able to react, more needs to be done -- especially in the realm of education. The questionnaire indicated that patterns of distrust and cynicism are already evident in the future journalists and military officers. Without a greater understanding, they will bring those attitudes to the ranks of the armed services and to the newsrooms.

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<sup>14</sup>Telephone interview with General Sidle.

While it is important that the military schools and colleges at the field-grade level are now more frequently discussing military-media relations, the questionnaire clearly indicates that junior officers, too, have a need to understand how the press and government interact.

There is a need for present Pentagon officials to recognize that these future officers will likely develop lasting opinions about the news media long before they reach the field-grade ranks of major through colonel. At least to this point, that is the only segment of the officer corps targeted by the Pentagon educational efforts. Despite the recommendations of the panels, no information on the media-relationship has yet been made available as a part of the educational curriculum for the cadets at the university level. General Sidle agreed this is not an ideal situation. "There is much more that needs to be done," he said. "Things are certainly moving too slowly in this area."<sup>15</sup>

A study done by British Royal Marine Maj. Alan Hooper, a student of the British media-military relationship, also called for the British military to begin training early

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

in military and journalism careers to be at its most effective. Major Hooper wrote:

There is a self-evident need for the military to learn about the media's position in society as part of their general education quite apart from the media's relevance to their profession associated with the press requirement to report the actions of the military. . . . It would seem prudent for all trainee journalists in Britain to be taught something about the function and organisation of the military as part of their general education.<sup>16</sup>

Major Hooper argued that too much attention in Britain has been placed on the kind of military training that has concentrated on preparing military people for "face-to-face confrontation(s)" with reporters. He believes that such policy grew from the experience of the British military in Ulster and he compared it to the American military experience in Vietnam. Major Hooper wrote that such training has been conducted

. . . without attention to the fundamentals about the media business. This has bred a generation of military officers. . . who, broadly speaking, misunderstand and mistrust the media.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, he recommended that the training for the

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<sup>16</sup>Alan Hooper, The Military and the Media, (Aldershot, England, 1982), p. 165.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid, p. 205.

military should become more oriented toward "awareness," beginning at basic training levels and should continue at intermediate service schools throughout military careers. It should be ". . . arranged (so) that it progressively prepares an officer for his dealings with the media at each state of his career."<sup>18</sup>

#### **The Need for Further Study**

The time has come for the United States to institute similar training initiatives for its military personnel and journalists. For this effort to be at its most effective, similar studies of military and media student attitudes ought to be undertaken. Not only should they be conducted at campuses with Reserve Officer Training and journalism programs, they should also be performed at military academies, officers' training schools, and in college mass communications programs. Through such efforts educators in each field discover new ways to prepare future officers and journalists for intelligent and positive interaction. Only then will the nation be properly served in times of future crises.

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p. 213.

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Relations Panel.

**APPENDIX**

## QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to elicit your opinions on a range of issues, but primarily involves your views on the role of the U.S. military and news media in American life. It is designed for use in the preparation of a master's thesis at University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism. Results may be published upon completion of the study. Your anonymity is guaranteed, however, since you are not required to reveal your name.

Your participation is most gratefully appreciated.

### Instructions

Answer the questions honestly and to the best of your ability. Answer by marking an X in the spaces provided. Mark only one answer per question, unless specific questions direct you to do otherwise.

Feel free to provide any comments in the space provided at the end of the questionnaire.

---

1. Do you think the U.S. news media are generally "objective" and fair in their coverage of events and issues, or do they usually favor one particular viewpoint?

- 1. ☐ always objective and fair
- 2. ☐ usually objective and fair
- 3. ☐ occasionally objective and fair
- 4. ☐ often not objective and fair
- 5. ☐ rarely objective and fair

2. What sources of news do you trust most and least? Rank order the media listed below, using a scale of 1 through 4, with 1 meaning greatest trust and 4 meaning least trust.

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. ____ radio      | 2. ____ newspapers |
| 3. ____ television | 4. ____ magazines  |

3. Concerning news coverage of U.S. wars, what do you think the role of the news media ought to be in covering wars?

1. ☐ should always support the military as a "team player"
2. ☐ should usually support the military as a "team player"
3. ☐ should be an objective observer reporting good or bad
4. ☐ should be objective but concentrate on wars' inhumanity
5. ☐ should always advocate an end to the war

4. Recall your study of history for a moment. If you were to rate the relationship between the U.S. news media and the military from World War I to the Grenada conflict, what rating would you give that relationship?

- |  |                                  |                                  |                                 |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| WW I: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> excellent    | 2. <input type="checkbox"/> good | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> fair | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> bad |
| WW II: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> excellent   | 2. <input type="checkbox"/> good | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> fair | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> bad |
| Korea: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> excellent   | 2. <input type="checkbox"/> good | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> fair | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> bad |
| Vietnam: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | 2. <input type="checkbox"/> good | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> fair | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> bad |
| Grenada: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | 2. <input type="checkbox"/> good | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> fair | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> bad |

5. What about the coverage of the Vietnam war? Do you feel that news media coverage of the Vietnam conflict hindered the United States' decision makers in their conduct of the war?

1. ☐ always hindered governmental decisions
2. ☐ usually hindered governmental decisions
3. ☐ sometimes hindered governmental decisions
4. ☐ rarely hindered governmental decisions
5. ☐ never hindered governmental decisions

6. Analyze your specific views of the "military-media relationship" in regard to war reporting. Is concern for "national security" a valid reason for government officials keeping information from reporters concerning:

a. A pending invasion?

1. ☐ absolutely
2. ☐ probably
3. ☐ only rarely
4. ☐ never

b. An invasion taking place?

1. ☐ absolutely
2. ☐ probably
3. ☐ only rarely
4. ☐ never

c. An invasion completed?

1. ☐ absolutely
2. ☐ probably
3. ☐ only rarely
4. ☐ never

7. Should concern for the personal safety of journalists be a sufficient reason for keeping reporters from invasion or battle scenes?

1. ☐ absolutely
2. ☐ probably
3. ☐ only rarely
4. ☐ never

8. Recall the Grenada invasion of two years ago. In a break with tradition, the U.S. government initially barred reporters from the island and later allowed them in after most of the fighting was over. In your opinion, was the decision to bar reporters from the invasion a violation of the U.S. Constitution?

1. ☐ definitely a violation
2. ☐ perhaps a violation
3. ☐ probably not a violation
4. ☐ definitely not a violation

9. In your opinion, who was responsible for keeping the media from being "on the scene" when the invasion took place?

- 1. ☐ U.S. civilian government leaders
- 2. ☐ U.S. military government leaders
- 3. ☐ both U.S. civilian and military leaders

10. What do you think of the contention of some commentators that press coverage of the Vietnam conflict may have been a factor in causing U.S. decision makers to leave reporters behind when U.S. forces initially invaded Grenada?

- 1. ☐ absolutely the reason
- 2. ☐ possibly the reason
- 3. ☐ probably not the reason
- 4. ☐ not the reason at all

11. What is your opinion of wartime censorship? Should the U.S. government be allowed to censor information gathered by the news media during wartime?

- 1. ☐ absolutely yes
- 2. ☐ occasionally only
- 3. ☐ probably not
- 4. ☐ absolutely never

12. Should military officers be allowed to speak freely on matters of foreign policy or should their remarks be subject to review to make certain they uphold the government position?

- 1. ☐ officers' speech should be controlled
- 2. ☐ officers should be allowed to speak freely

13. What about military public relations officers? What do you think their role ought to be in serving their military unit?

- 1. ☐ promote "good" news only, while hiding the bad
- 2. ☐ promote "good" news, but answer up to the bad
- 3. ☐ disclose good and bad news equally



14. In regard to your opinions on the "military-media" relationship on the whole, do you think the media and the military are too far apart in their respective ideologies to ever "get along?"

1. ☐ they may never completely resolve their differences
2. ☐ they probably can resolve most of their differences

15. Along the same line, how well do you feel the American public is likely to be served in the event of a future U.S. war by the existing relationship between the media and military?

1. ☐ very well
2. ☐ well
3. ☐ satisfactorily
4. ☐ less than satisfactorily
5. ☐ terribly

16. How much trust do you have in the U.S. "institutions" listed below? (Use the scale of 1 through 5, with 1 equaling "total trust"; 2 = "a lot of trust"; 3 = "some trust"; 4 = "little trust"; 5 = "no trust at all").

- |                  |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. military:     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| b. Congress:     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| c. labor unions: | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| d. news media:   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| e. Presidency:   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| f. professors:   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| g. big business: | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| h. diplomats:    | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| i. historians:   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| j. voters:       | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |

17. If you were to rate how happy you are with the way the United States is handling the areas listed below, how would you rate each? (Use the scale of 1 through 5, with 1 equaling "extremely satisfied"; 2 = "considerably satisfied"; 3 = "satisfied"; 4 = "somewhat dissatisfied"; 5 = "very dissatisfied.")

a. The war of "ideas" between the United States and the Soviet Union?

☐ 1      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4      ☐ 5

b. Coverage of world affairs by the U.S. news media?

☐ 1      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4      ☐ 5

c. U.S. military strength and preparedness?

☐ 1      ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4      ☐ 5

18. How knowledgeable do you think the average American is about problems facing the world?

1. ☐ extremely knowledgeable
2. ☐ knowledgeable
3. ☐ somewhat lacking in knowledge
4. ☐ totally lacking in knowledge

19. How do you feel about the U.S. and Soviet arms race? From your perspective, is the U.S. ahead of the Soviets, about even, or falling behind?

1. ☐ staying ahead
2. ☐ about even
3. ☐ falling behind

20. Do you feel that current defense policies and international relations policies are:

1. ☐ making war impossible?
2. ☐ decreasing the likelihood of war?
3. ☐ not affecting the probability of war one way or the other?
4. ☐ increasing the likelihood of war?
5. ☐ making war in the near future a virtual certainty?

21. How do you view the U.S. military budget? Should funding for military purposes be kept at current levels, increased or reduced?

1. ☐ kept the same
2. ☐ increased
3. ☐ reduced

22. It has been just more than a decade since the United States ended its involvement in the Vietnam war. In your view, was U.S. involvement there a mistake?

1. ☐ yes
2. ☐ no

23. What is your opinion on a military draft?

a. Should all able-bodied 18-year-old men be drafted for military service?

1. ☐ yes      2. ☐ no

b. Should all able-bodied 18-year-old women be drafted for military service?

1. ☐ yes      2. ☐ no

24. Examining the problems the United States faces today as listed below, how would you rate each? (Use a scale of 1 through 8, with 1 equaling the most important problem and 8 equaling the least important problem).

- |                                      |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. ____ keeping the<br>peace         | 5. ____ crime                  |
| 2. ____ high cost<br>of living       | 6. ____ labor union<br>turmoil |
| 3. ____ national budget<br>deficit   | 7. ____ racial<br>inequality   |
| 4. ____ national education<br>policy | 8. ____ immigration<br>policy  |

25. How well do you think the United States news media do their job of delivering news?

a. In terms of quantity of news provided:

1. [ ] exceptionally well
2. [ ] pretty well
3. [ ] okay
4. [ ] somewhat poorly
5. [ ] very poorly

b. In terms of quality of news provided:

1. [ ] exceptionally well
2. [ ] pretty well
3. [ ] okay
4. [ ] somewhat poorly
5. [ ] very poorly

26. If you were to rate the credibility of the news media listed below, which would be the most credible and which the least credible? (Use the scale of 1 through 5, with 1 equaling "very credible"; 2 = "somewhat credible"; 3 = "not so credible"; 4 = "rarely credible"; 5 = "no credibility.")

newspapers:	[ ] 1	[ ] 2	[ ] 3	[ ] 4	[ ] 5
radio:	[ ] 1	[ ] 2	[ ] 3	[ ] 4	[ ] 5
magazines:	[ ] 1	[ ] 2	[ ] 3	[ ] 4	[ ] 5
television:	[ ] 1	[ ] 2	[ ] 3	[ ] 4	[ ] 5

(Military Version)

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27. Let's say you have received your commission and you recently arrived at your first base. Your commander informs you that you have been chosen to do an interview with a local reporter concerning a project you've directed. How much will you likely trust the reporter you will encounter?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> trust fully    | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> distrust somewhat |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> trust somewhat | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> totally distrust  |

28. The news media sometimes have "classified" information leaked to them from government sources for reasons ranging from political infighting to concern about the national welfare. Do you generally think that when the media publish or air that information they are right or wrong in doing so?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> perfectly all right        | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> probably not all right   |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> all right in<br>some cases | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> absolutely not all right |

29. How would you rate the quality of your knowledge about the role of the news media in American life?

1. ☐ excellent
2. ☐ good
3. ☐ fair
4. ☐ poor
5. ☐ very poor

30. Are you male or female?

- |                                  |                                    |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> male | 2. <input type="checkbox"/> female |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|

You have completed the questionnaire. Please add any comments you may have below. Thanks for your participation.

---

27. Let's say you have graduated and have just arrived at your first reporting job. Your boss informs you that you have been chosen to do an interview at a local military base with an officer who is directing a project there. How much will you likely trust the military officer you will encounter?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> trust fully    | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> distrust somewhat |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> trust somewhat | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> totally distrust  |

28. Governments sometimes leak "classified" information to reporters for reasons ranging from political infighting to concern about the national welfare. Do you generally think that publishing or airing that kind of information is the right or wrong thing to do?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> perfectly all right     | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> probably not all right   |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> all right in some cases | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> absolutely not all right |

29. How would you rate the quality of your knowledge about the role of the military in American life?

1. ☐ excellent
2. ☐ good
3. ☐ fair
4. ☐ poor
5. ☐ very poor

30. Are you male or female?

- |                                  |                                    |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> male | 2. <input type="checkbox"/> female |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|

You have completed the questionnaire. Please add any comments you may have below. Thanks for your participation.

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